

MISCELLANEA NOVA;
CONTAINING,
AMIDST A VARIETY OF OTHER MATTERS
CURIOUS AND INTERESTING,
REMARKS ON BOSWELL'S JOHNSON;
WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS,
AND SOME NEW ANECDOTES OF THAT EXTRAORDINARY
CHARACTER:
A CRITIQUE ON BÜRGER'S LEONORA;
IN WHICH SHE IS CLEARLY PROVED OF ENGLISH
EXTRACTION;
AND AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY
ON THE
ART OF READING AND SPEAKING IN PUBLIC,
IN TWO PARTS.

A NEW EDITION.

BY S. WHYTE, AND HIS SON, E.-A. WHYTE.

D U B L I N:

Printed by Robert Murchbank,

FOR THE EDITOR,

EDWARD-ATHENRY WHYTE, NO. 75, GRAFTON-STREET;

OF WHOM IT MAY BE HAD, AND OF THE BOOKSELLERS.

1800.



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DISCERNING THE TRUTH

THE TRUTH IS A GREATLY
VALUED AND DESIRED
PROPERTY OF THE HUMAN MIND
AND THE FIRST STEP TO THE
ACQUISITION OF IT IS THE
REMOVAL OF ALL PREJUDICES

AND THE SECOND IS THE
CULTURE OF THE REASON
AND THE THIRD IS THE
PRACTICE OF THE VIRTUES

A CRITIQUE ON THE

IN WHICH THE GREAT
PRINCIPLES OF THE
HUMAN MIND ARE
EXAMINED AND THE
METHODS OF INSTRUCTION
ARE DISCUSSED

ART OF WRITING

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REMOVAL OF ALL PREJUDICES

1800

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p. 16, l. 8	— a way he had	—	a way he also had.
p. 17, l. 24,	— brave Earl Percy,	read	The Hon. Mr. Percy.
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in the note]			
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p. 117, l. 13,	— freights	read	fraits.

N. B. The Essay on the Art of Reading, having no absolute connexion with any other part of this Work, the Book-binder may place before or after the Remarks, &c. or do them up separately, at the Option of the purchaser.

P R E F A C E.

THE REMARKS ON MR. BOSWELL'S LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON were, on their first publication, annexed as an APPENDIX to the Third Edition of WHYTE'S POEMS, for which they were originally drawn up, as referred to in the setting out; but, lest it might swell the volume to too great a bulk, many passages were omitted, which, tho' the form remains the same, are in this detached Edition restored, and a considerable portion of fresh matter occasionally introduced. Several Original Papers by way of farther Proof and Illustration, never before printed, are also given; which, it is imagined, will be a treat to the curious in literary history, and deemed, not improbably by many, the most interesting part of the work. The present performance, without any pretensions to rivalry, has a chance to be read by some who have not seen Mr. Boswell's volumes, and others, who have perused them, may not have them at hand; several passages are therefore cited verbatim, which might otherwise have been spared: the following extract from his preface is likewise given as a specimen of his manner, and as a key to certain passages and allusions in the course of the REMARKS, which, without it, might appear disingenuous or obscure.

Thus then Mr. Boswell asserts his prerogatives, and denounces the tribe of objectors. . . . " I, at last, deliver to the world a Work which I have long
b promised,

promised, and of which, I am afraid, too high expectations have been raised. The delay of its publication must be imputed, in a considerable degree, to the extraordinary zeal which has been shewn by distinguished persons in all quarters to supply me with additional information concerning its illustrious Subject; resembling in this the grateful tribes of ancient nations, of which every individual was eager to throw a stone upon the grave of a departed Hero, and thus to share in the pious office of erecting an honourable monument to his memory.

“ The labour and anxious attention with which I have collected and arranged the materials of which these volumes are composed, will hardly be conceived by those who read with careless facility. The stretch of mind, and prompt assiduity by which so many conversations were preserved, I myself, at some distance of time, contemplate with wonder; and I must be allowed to suggest, that the nature of the work, in other respects, as it consists of innumerable detached particulars, all which, even the most minute, I have spared no pains to ascertain with a scrupulous authenticity, has occasioned a degree of trouble far beyond that of any other species of composition. Were I to detail the books which I have consulted, and the inquiries which I have found it necessary to make by various channels, I should probably be thought ridiculously ostentatious. Let me only observe, as a specimen of my trouble, that I have sometimes been obliged to run half over London, in order to fix a date correctly; which, when I had accomplished,

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P R E F A C E.

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I well knew, would obtain me no praise, though a failure would have been to my discredit. And after all, perhaps, hard as it may be, I shall not be surprized if omissions or mistakes be pointed out with invidious severity. I have also been extremely careful as to the exactness of my quotations; holding, that there is a respect due to the Rublick which should oblige every Author to attend to this, and never to presume to introduce them with — ‘I think I have read,’ — or — ‘If I remember right;’ — when the originals may be examined.”

Advertisement to the first Edit. p. vii. viii. ix.

Again: “It seems to me, in my moments of self-complacency, that this extensive biographical work, however inferior in its nature, may in one respect be assimilated to the ODYSSEY. Amidst a thousand entertaining and instructive episodes the HERO is never long out of sight; for they are all in some degree connected with him; and HE in the whole course of the History is exhibited by the Authour for the best advantage of his readers.

“Should there be any cold-blooded and morose mortals who really dislike this Book, I will give them a story to apply. When the great Duke of Marlborough, accompanied by Lord Cadogan, was one day reconnoitering the army in Flanders, a heavy rain came on, and they both called for their cloaks. Lord Cadogan’s servant, a good humoured, alert lad, brought his Lordship’s in a minute. The Duke’s servant, a lazy, sulky dog, was so sluggish, that his Grace, being wet to the skin, reproved him, and had
for

for answer, with a grunt, 'I came as fast as I could.' Upon which the Duke calmly said, 'Cadogan, I would not for a thousand pounds have that fellow's temper.'

Advertisement to second Edit. p. xv. xvi.

The honour of a Nation greatly depends on its literary characters ; and, besides gratifying curiosity, it is of some importance, that the little which can generally be collected of their own lives, should be fairly and honestly reported. It is true, Johnson's are rare ; and a Boswell, who could patiently act the humble servant, the best part of his life, for the purpose of furnishing the memoirs of an author by profession, is a phenomenon in literature ; it is a felicity that all, who have deserved well of the Public, are not to expect. Their works will speak for themselves, and posterity will perhaps do justice to their merit ; in other respects, they labour under peculiar disadvantages, and must abide the common fate. National prejudice, private pique, and the jealousy of contemporary wits may rudely assail them, and often, in direct proportion to their merit, they become objects of calumny and reproach ; such a procedure, however common, neither promotes the interests of virtue, nor contributes to the happiness of society. It is the vice of little minds, and a scandal to the republic of letters. A great character, in worthy situations, is an object of virtuous contemplation ; but that minuteness of Anecdote, that ostentatious display of trifles, which we sometimes meet with, is a vicious indulgence of inquisitive impertinence ; a flagrant breach of private confidence, and

and an infringement of the rules of good breeding. 'Tis like intruding on the sacred privacy of beauty to expose her in ungracious situations. What is the world wiser or better for being told, that Semiramis loved a game at romps; that Alexander the Great had the hiccough; the Czar Peter on his travels took a pinch of snuff and sneezed; or that the Author of the Rambler paired his own nails, or performed any other of the petty offices common to his kind? * Such puerilities might answer an end in the hands of honest Joe Miller, and serve as decorations to a jest-book; but are a disgrace to the pages of history, which should exhibit finished portraits of life for instruction, not a useless farago of caricatures.

The retailer of what are called good things treads on a slippery surface, and should do it with judgment and reserve. Wit, particularly of the colloquial kind, is a sort of mental electricity, sudden in its effect, and evanescent in its nature. Many things tell well enough in a private circle, where all are on the gape, prepared for the broad grin, and the prejudice in your favour; which, abstracted from local assimilations, cut but a sorry figure upon paper. Witness the numerous collections of repartees, and bon mots, from Seutonius's twelve Cæsars, to Boswell's Memoirs of Johnson inclusive. The sportive flippancies of conversation, the little triumphs of petulance, or casual ebullitions of spleen, may pass for the moment, and, when the laugh is excited, have fully answered their end; but when indulged to the
prejudice

* Vide Addenda, p. 49, (a) New Anecdotes of Johnson.

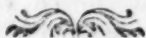
prejudice of a deserving member of society, and obtruded as historical designations of character, they shew a pitiful ambition in the fool that uses them, and, except to expose him, are unworthy of record. To apply Mr. Boswell's own story—"I would not for a thousand pounds have that fellow's temper."

Whether Mr. Boswell comes properly within this description, every reader will determine for himself; but such were the reflections which occurred to the writer of these pages on perusal of that elaborate production. Of the very many eminent characters mentioned in the course of those volumes, there is scarcely one, but first or last, is presented in a disadvantageous light, and marked with some comparative draw-back, as a foil to heighten and set off the consequence of his illustrious friend. It was an unnecessary prostitution of applause; Dr. Johnson was sufficient in himself; admitting the facts, there would have been a merit in retrenchment. The shades of his own character, if not wholly concealed, might have been softened, and thrown into the background, without injury to any; his weaknesses could not be improved by comparisons, and his excellencies stood in no need of such invidious support. *De mortuis nihil nisi bonum*, says the adage; Dr. Johnson's reading, *De mortuis nihil nisi verum*, is not clearly an amendment; *bonum* implies *verum*. Biographers are not upon their oath, and if in nothing but the truth is to be understood the whole truth, it involves an impossibility; for the truth *in toto* can never be obtained;

obtained ; and after all, if the whole truth were within compass, a great part would be nugatory and ridiculous ; the straining after which is but a vain prodigality of time, and an affected parade of impartiality to no end. We have proofs and precedents enow constantly before us, and need no monitor to shew what little things are great men.

Mr. Boswell's Life of Johnson derives importance from the subject, and has been generally read ; on the same account it will find its way into the repositories of learning. We envy not his honours, and only wish he had pruned away certain morbid excrescencies, and, with a little more circumspection, made choice of his ground ; it would have been more of a piece with his pompous declarations, and precluded the necessity of an antidote, consequently the present attempt.

The writer of these sheets is conscious he has need of many apologies ; but his intentions are pure ; he seeks not to tear the well-earned laurels from the brows of any man ; it would be an idle conceit, equally illiberal and absurd. His only aim is to set in a proper point of view, and do justice to, what he conceives, an injured character ; the character of a good man, which he cannot suppose in any light to be properly a subject of obloquy or contempt. He for a time hoped he should have been spared the friendly office, and has to regret it was not taken up by abler hands.



PREPARING-FOR THE PRESS,
A NEW EDITION
OF
P O E M S
ON
VARIOUS SUBJECTS,
ORNAMENTED WITH PLATES,
AND ILLUSTRATED WITH
NOTES, ORIGINAL LETTERS, AND CURIOUS
INCIDENTAL ANECDOTES.

IN THE COURSE OF WHICH,
THE PRETENDED MIRACLES OF VESPASIAN ARE
EXAMINED AND DETECTED.

BY SAMUEL WHYTE.

THE FOURTH EDITION,
CAREFULLY COLLATED WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST IMPROVED
MANUSCRIPT,
BY EDWARD-ATHENRY WHYTE, F. C. T. C. D.

R E M A R K S
ON
B O S W E L L ' S J O H N S O N .

—DAMNS WITH FAINT PRAISE. POPE.

UPON a careful revifal of the preceding fheets,* previous to publication, the Editor was led by fome circumftances occafionally mentioned to confult Bofwell's Life of Dr. Johnfon,† particularly the paffages refpecting the late Mr. Sheridan; and could not help obferving, that an unprejudiced Reader, judging of its accuracy and impartiality from thofe fpecimens, which are pretty copious, would hardly be inclined to think very advantageoufly of that multifarious production. Facts, where facts are reforted to, glaringly perverted; commendation fneakingly and invidioufly beftowed; ill-natured ftrictures unnceffarily, as they are on moft occafions unwarrantably, introduced; and frequent contradictions, as to Mr. Sheridan, are its predominant characterifticks. Our Author has in one ftriking inftance taken the task of refcuing his Friend's reputation from wanton and unmerited obloquy upon himfelf.‡ And the Editor, with deference prefumes, that the moft fanguine of the Doctor's and his Biographer's admirers will not be difpleafed, upon the principles of equity to the living as well as the dead, to fee a curfory investigation of the reft impartially attempted. Some may think it a fubject of little importance; the lovers of truth and literature may poffibly entertain a different opinion. The lovers of literature will think that the

B annals

* WHYTE'S POEMS, with notes, to which this was originally annexed:

† Or rather Bofwell's own life under the umbrage of Johnfon's. . . .
3 vols. 8vo. 2d. Edit. London, 1793. — Vol. i. p. 341, paffim. — The firft edit. which bears date April 20, Anno. 1791, was in quarto.

‡ See the real Hiftory of the Gold Medal given to the Author of the Tragedy of Douglas, WHYTE'S POEMS published by the Author, (in the EXTRACTS inferted for convenience, at the end of the Work) page lxvi. likewife p. lv. *ibid*

annals of literature should be preserved pure; and what was an object in the Life of Johnson,—or why else introduced?—cannot be indifferent to the admirers of candour and truth.

Boswell says,* “when I returned to London in the year 1762, to my surprise and regret, I found an irreconcilable difference had taken place between Johnson and Sheridan. A pension of two hundred pounds a year had been given to Sheridan. Johnson, who thought slightly of Sheridan’s Art, upon hearing that He was also pensioned, exclaimed, “What! have they given HIM a pension? then it is time to give up mine.”—Sheridan might have retorted in the language of Jaffier, *’tis to me you owe it.*—Boswell attempts to palliate, though not wholly to justify, that unprovoked fallacy; and, leaving his readers under whatever impression to their reflections, after an unnecessary detail of extraneous circumstances, at the end of two pages he tells us—“Johnson complained that a man who disliked him, repeated this sarcasm to Sheridan, without telling him what followed, which was, that after a pause he added,” “However, I am glad that Mr. Sheridan has a pension, for he is a very good man.” “Sheridan,” continues Boswell, “could never forgive this hasty contemptuous expression; it rankled in his mind; and though I informed him what Johnson had said, and that he would be very glad to meet him amicably, he positively declined repeated offers which I made, and once went off abruptly from a house where he and I were engaged

* See Boswell, vol. i. p. 343, 4. Johnson was the avowed enemy of Scotland and Scotchmen, and no friend to the Stage; yet he wrote a play, and whimsical to think, “the ease and independence to which he at last attained by Royal munificence,” [p. 447,] he owed, it seems, to Scotch Actors, who played for his Benefit, under the Management of an Irish Prompter; for Lord Loughborough himself acknowledges, rather superciliously, “Sheridan rang the bell;” and, to carry on the metaphor, when the performance was over, the panegyrist of Auchinleck comes in for his share with the life of Johnson, in three ponderous quartos, by way of Epilogue.—The first edition is in this instance referred to.

engaged to dine, because he was told that Dr. Johnson was to be there.* . . . I could perceive that Mr. Sheridan was by no means satisfied with Johnson's acknowledging him to be a good man. That could not soothe his injured vanity. I could not but smile, at the same time that I was offended, to observe, Sheridan, in the *Life of Swift* which he afterwards published, attempting, in the writhings of his resentment, to depreciate Johnson, by characterizing him, as, . . . "a Writer of gigantic fame in these days of little men." . . . Mr. Boswell was offended! poor Gentleman! . . . and look ye, Sirs! he was tickled withal, and he smiled! or peradventure in the *writings of his Resentment*, more appositely to give it, in the picturesque Language of Milton, he 'grinned horrible a ghastly smile.' But in the event of this antithetical crisis, still true to his text, not an iota escapes him of Sheridan's Provocations. . . . Had Messrs. Boswell and Co. an exclusive patent for offence? . . . Dr. Johnson had previously attacked Sheridan's friend Swift, and in the moody spirit of detraction he contemptuously treats him as a writer; he reprobates him as a man, and in order to level him with the lowest of the species, he brands that very Swift, a Clergyman, a Dignitary of his own Church, the Dean of St. Patrick's, with folly in the extreme; prevarication, which is lying of the worst kind and cowardice.† These are the odious stigmas which Dr. Johnson avowedly labours to attach to the character of an eminent Divine; for his abilities looked up to by the Great, and for his unexampled charity and conduct in his pastoral calling, by the lower orders of the community, where his memory is yet held in reverence, almost adored. What writer but the encomiast of Savage could dirty his pages with such foul-mouthed aspersions? Swift perhaps had his particularities; but was Dr. Johnson the man to throw the first stone? He

perhaps

* This vexatious Dinner Party is brought again upon the tapis, vol. iii. p. 594. † See Johnson's *Poets* and Sheridan's *Swift*, p. 449, &c.

perhaps was remiss in his court to the Doctor's arrogated superiority;* he perhaps might aspire to equality, and equality in the vocabulary of vanity implies rivalry. The world cannot contain two Suns. What, Swift! the Vicar of Laracor! was HE a Sun? Nay, Sir! that was enough, more than enough to rouse 'the constitutional indolence of Johnson,' to seize every opportunity of unsphering him. His common expression in talking of him was, "That Swift was a very shallow fellow." Could any ordinary acquaintance, much less a friend, endeared to him from infancy, and bound to him by unremitting offices of kindness, stand by and tacitly authorize such malevolent calumnies by passing them unnoticed? Sheridan could not, and for that he is traduced! The Rambler, a valuable periodical paper, contains many splendid declamations on morality, and the author under that description, his Biographer holds forth as the Mirrour of Truth; but another writer, who was no slave to prejudice, and in his own person little prone to 'the thundering tongue of saucy and audacious eloquence,' has left a few unvarnished lines, that shew him not unversed in the science of life, by which that profound master of Ethics, without disparagement to his talents or blemish to his memory, might have profited; and his lectures would not have been the worse attended to. Boswell was possibly too much engrossed in his lucubrations, recollecting and minuting down the day's eventful history, to read such flimsy rhapsodies as Othello, or possibly never *soberly* considered, except when the Firm† were to come in for snacks, that

Good

* See Boswell, 2d edit. as before, vol. i. pp. 108, 416, 522, vol. ii. p. 103, and vol. iii. p. 310, where Sheridan's opinion of Johnson's implacable resentment against Swift is also noticed; and I have myself often heard the cause so assigned, asserted as an established truth.

† Firm. . . . a Term in commercial usage, implying the ostensible head, proprietor or proprietors of banks, and mercantile houses, who sometimes

and

Good name in man and woman
 Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
 Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
 'Twas mine; 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
 But he, that filches from me my good name,
 Robs me of that which not enriches him,
 And makes me poor indeed.

SHAKESP.

But the traducing of Sheridan was not the only object. Mr. Boswell had other irons in the embers, and we shall presently see more is meant than meets the ear. His own character, a little more attentively scrutinized, may help us to develop the mystery; let us decypher it. Pope, who had also some knowledge of mankind, affords us a criterion.

Search then the ruling passion; there alone
 The wild are constant and the cunning known;
 That clue once found unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears and Wharton stands confess'd, &c.

For Wharton read Boswell; his ruling passion was the lust of a niche among the literati. Without entering into a particular examen of his pretensions, he was calculated to move in a secondary orbit and wanted conspicuity. From his youth up he was troubled with an incurable and dangerous malady; by professor Juvenal, an acknowledged adept, termed *Cacoëthes Scribendi*.^{*} Being of a communicative turn; redundantly loquacious and a confirmed egotist, the minutiae of anecdote and biographic detail, requiring no extraordinary degree of invention, and depending more on memory than genius, suited his talents;

and it good policy to admit a nominal partner to a small dividend on the profits, without any accession to the capital, which so circumstanced stands in the name of the Firm, as it might be Johnson and Co. . . . The word in this acceptance is not in our copy of the Dictionary.

* Tenet insanabile multos

Scribendi cacoëthes, et ægro in corde senescit. Juv. Sat. vii. v. 53.

The curse of writing is an endless itch.

DRAWDEN.

talents; and so intoxicated was he with the vanity of ranking as an author, that ere the tonfor had well cleared the down from his new-reaped chin* he tore himself from his mother's apron strings, and made a journey of some hundreds of leagues by land and by water in quest of a subject. Such was his diffidence, and the distrust he entertained of his powers! A defect, which some hereditary strength of nerves, and a little experience in life, enabled him to get the better of; as by the tenour of his writings is demonstrated. . . . We do not perceive any very uncommon marks of originality in his exubrant and ponderous journals to entitle him to the envied distinction he aimed at; but the lucky choice of a subject is of the first importance to an author, and so far we believe him in the secret. In the way of attraction the celebrity of the subject is not unfrequently as much looked to as the merits of the performance, of which all readers cannot be supposed competent judges. For instance, not to degrade our Biographer by comparison,† Homer is perhaps as much indebted to Troy as Troy is to Homer, who, as well as Mr. Boswell, as the criticks will have it, sometimes nods. However, without any temptation of friendship to praise or to abuse him, we must give our author (as he now ranks) credit for his journey. The complexion of affairs abroad was inviting; Corsica was struggling for her liberties under the auspices of her brave patriotic General, a second Cato! The world had all its eyes on Paoli; his life was a desideratum; Mr. Boswell was on the spot; by Mr. Boswell it was written, and, till curiosity fell asleep, undeniably it was read: Fame and profit went hand

* Quo tondente gravis juveni mihi barbara sonabat.

Juv. Sat. i. v. 25, & Sat x. v. 226.

† The application is not unfounded: vide Preface to Johnson's Life, p. xv. Be not astonished, gentle Reader! There may you see the ingenious Author of that extensive Biographical Work, in his moments of self-complacency, by assimilation, claiming kindred with the venerable Ancient. If happily some future Pope should do it into Verse, our master of Affleck [as the name is pronounced] will have rhyme and reason to be vain.

hand in hand; an enviable denouement for a first attempt; and a flattering earnest of future success.

His next speculation lay nearer home, and London was the scene of operation; an ample field for enterprize, and a foil not ungenial to oddities. He had tried his powers, and now was the time to improve upon this System. By lucky construction, *Nescitur a Sociis*, was an adage in his favour. He frequented the societies of wits, and enlisted, as was his bent, in the train of singular characters; none more singular than the extraordinary man, to whom at last he contrived to get himself introduced, for the purpose of shewing him off in all his attitudes, and gratifying the world with his Memoirs; in every point of view a heavy and laborious task; but what will not a man do to be for ever known? * The patriarch Jacob, not irreverently to speak, served Laban two apprenticeships for a wife; our obsequious Biographer served Dr. Johnson three, a more imperious slave-driver, for a feather. † Now, *the prospect clears and Boswell stands confess'd*. He had to wriggle himself into the good graces of Johnson; to accumulate matter and to make a Book; to ensure notoriety and pocket the emolument. Freedom of opinion and liberty of speech; the obligations of friendship and the ties of kindred must give way; even his dear country falls a sacrifice to the caprice and prejudices of his Idol. Mr. Boswell, with his usual address, anticipates the charge,

* See Cowley's Works—the Sentiment is his.

† In the Summer of 1761, Mr. Boswell tells us Mr. Sheridan read Lectures on the English Language, &c. in Edinburgh, at which time his acquaintance with him commenced; and his acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, Anno. 1763. See vol. I. p. 343. Thus speaks he for himself: "This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose Memoirs I am now writing: an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life."—N. B. His Work had been anticipated by three or four competent Biographers, whom, in his way, he very cordially belpatters.

charge, and affects to despise the imputation.* But, maugre all his finesses, if Mr. Boswell, at the shrine of the venerated sage, did not bewray his own nest, no two-legged animal, since Adam to save appearances used the fig-leaf, ever did. *Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii.* Mr. Boswell full of the inspiring god, and prostrate at the feet of his divinity, uncorks the incense-vase of adulation:† himself the high priest officiates at the altar of his own rearing; and, it is a rule without an exception, all things, animate and inanimate, must bow down to Baal. Sheridan, who never abused Scotland, and had confessedly rendered him many acceptable kindnesses, was the first victim. A misunderstanding subsisted between Johnson and Sheridan; it could not be kept a secret; Boswell perceived it, and like a keen-eyed politician takes advantage of the hint. To say nothing of the private uses he made of it in paying his devoirs *tete-a-tete*, the passage before us is a master-stroke in its way; every thing that might bear hard upon Johnson is extenuated; every thing that could make against Sheridan is pressed forward and dilated; not satisfied with an orderly and connected statement of facts, which is the great merit of a historian, like a true partizan, he beats abroad for matter, and in defiance of all chronological arrangement, to which in other cases he fastidiously confines his narrative, he forestalls the succession of events; resorts to widely distant periods, and dwells on topics wholly irrelative to the affair in hand; an artful manoeuvre to conceal his real views, by which 'those who read with careless facility,' a numerous class, are imposed on. The attention is called off, and diverted to new objects, and the original cause of difference, embarrassed with foreign circumstances, is thrown into shade and lost sight of. Thus craftily shifting his ground, the odium of commencing hostilities is transferred to Sheridan, and by a studied

* See Boswell as before vol. i. p 350 *passim*.

† *Incense-vase* of adulation, alias his ink-horn.

a studied latitude of phraseology an insinuation is conveyed, that he, Boswell the *smiler*, had actually seen in manuscript the obnoxious paragraph referred to in Sheridan's Life of Swift, which, as he says, was afterwards published; meaning, as he would have it understood, at a very short interval; though not a line of it was then, or for full twenty years afterwards, committed to paper. By this curious pretext a prejudice is created in favour of his maligner, consequently operating to the disadvantage of the character injured, whenever his name occurs, which is by no means seldom, in the remainder of that and the two succeeding volumes. Having thus settled the preliminaries and adjusted matters to his satisfaction, in the overflowings of self-complacency our Biographer, to take it as before on his own report, *smiled*, and incontinently proceeds—

“ This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnson of one of his most agreeable resources for amusement in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate; and Mrs. Sheridan was a most agreeable companion to an intellectual man. She was sensible, ingenious, unassuming, yet communicative. I recollect, with satisfaction, many pleasing hours which I passed with her, under the hospitable roof of her husband, who was to me a very kind friend.” * . . . Mr. Boswell, for the purpose of quitting scores with his

C

very

* The remaining part of the paragraph must not be omitted. . . .

“ Her Novel, entitled MEMOIRS OF MISS SIDNEY BIDDULPH, contains an excellent moral, while it inculcates a future state of retribution, and what it teaches is impressed upon the mind by a series of as deep distress as can affect humanity, in the amiable and pious Heroine, who goes to her grave unrelieved, but resigned, and full of hope of Heaven's mercy.—Johnson paid her the highest compliment upon it: *I know not, Madam! that you have a right, upon moral principles, to make your Readers suffer so much.*” Boswell's Johnson, vol. i. p. 353, 4.

very kind friend, has him again in the same volume thus . . . " Talking of a barrister who had a bad utterance, some " one, to rouse Johnson, wickedly said, that he was unfortunate in not having been taught oratory by Sheridan;"* and then commits him to the laceration of Johnson and Garrick, which he glosses with the subsequent defence:

" I should perhaps have suppressed this disquisition concerning a person of whose merit and worth I think with respect, had he not attacked Johnson so outrageously in his Life of Swift, and at the same time, treated us, his admirers, as a set of pigmies. He who has provoked the last of wit, cannot complain that he smarts from it."†

Alas, poor Yorick! 'tis true he could not complain; for he was sleeping in peace with his fathers before those notable animadversions saw the light ‡. . . Let us now fairly examine the premises. . . . *Ecce iterum Crispinus!* . . . Sheridan's Life of Swift again prematurely pressed into the service! . . . Is not this something like writhing? . . . several years back, according to the manifestation of events, he had us upon the same ground; he confessed himself offended; but he rode his hobby in a pretty decent ambling pace, and smiled. But behold, when we thought the business quite over and forgotten, he takes us at a short turn, and we find him mounted again. . . . No offence I hope; yes, by St. Patrick (an Irish oath) but there is, and much offence too;

That trot became a gallop soon

Which gall'd him in his feat.

He

* Johnson, in reply . . . " Nay, Sir! if he had been taught by " Sheridan, he would have cleared the room." Vol. i. p. 543. † Ibid,

‡ Sheridan died at Margate in Kent, August the 16th, 1788. Boswell's book did not appear till about three years after, as we may collect from the date of his dedication, April 20th 1791, which was full seven years subsequent to Sheridan's Life of Swift, first published in 1784.

He winces, gentle reader! you see he winces! do but observe his contortions! John Gilpin, sir! was a stoick to him—Softly, softly, good Mr. Boswell! tho' anxious enough to conceal your chagrin, you veritably take the matter too heinously. Vanity and prejudice apart, what might Posterity say to your strictures? they might say, here is a strong dash of prejudice, malevolence, crimination and abuse. . . . But where is the wit? We have Mr. Boswell's word for it, and that is conclusive; for what observer of less consummate sagacity could have made the discovery? and what scholiast of less consummate acumen could have conceived, in that same luminous fally, any reference to a work, which was then a nonentity in the archives of literature? What a loss to the nation in these perilous times HE was not Prime Minister! . . . Seriously, the lash, is a smart metaphorical conceit, though in our humble apprehension somewhat awkwardly and ambiguously brought in. . . . The lash! ay! the lash of wit; indeed, as one may say, a very pretty figure; in very admirable hands, and very cavalierly exercised; exercised by the said Mr. Boswell! Does the said Mr. Boswell apply it as a principal, or merely as a proxy? saving his modesty we rather think the latter; be that as it may, Sheridan, the reprobrated writer of Swift's Life, was not the aggressor; and supposing him amenable, the correction, as before hinted, for we are compelled to reiterate, was inflicted by anticipation. The provocation alledged was not even in embrio. The effect cannot precede its cause, and, at the date of the conversation referred to, his employers, the booksellers, had not even suggested to Johnson the expediency of the Lives of the Poets containing his libel upon Swift, which Sheridan in the course of his subsequent account of his friend and godfather incidentally takes up.

The

The occasion offered; it was not fought.* But what of that, the great subject of the memoirs, Mr. Boswell was then writing, is the momentous consideration, and at all events must be supported; it behoved no less the wren on the eagle's wing to have an eye to his own situation. Under such impressions, it is not to be wondered at, that every nice offence of Sheridan's is exaggerated; set in a notebook, learned and conned by rote to cast into his teeth; while the gross scurrilities of the man who daily enjoyed so many hours of needful amusement under his hospitable roof are selected for admiration, and exhibited with eclat. Fortunately ours is the age of reason; the volume of nature, in legible characters lies open to inspection, where all men, no doubt equally competent, are readers. Hypotheses are framed, and to shew their proficiency, or haply to escape the lash of wit, every absurdity has its advocate. . . . Johnson, and his satellite, Boswell, are arraigned; if any man should cavil at our defence of the illustrious pair, we deprecate his censure, and plead prescription and the fashion of the times.

In the affair under consideration, though neither the justice or candour of the parties be conspicuous, on the principles of our new philosophy, the literary despot may be cleared of imputation, and the supposed anachronisms of his biographer may be reconciled. . . . Dr. Johnson paid a visit to the Highlands, an incident that cannot be indifferent to our brethren of the North; there, as we may well presume, in the manner of one of our modern illuminati, or more opportunely from his trusty Achates, 'his humble attendant,' as he modestly styles himself, who was native there, the sage acquired the mysterious faculty of SECOND
SIGHT,

* The disquisition concerning Sheridan, vindictively brought forward by Boswell, he dates Ann. 1769. Johnson's Critique on the Life and Writings of Swift, in his Account of the Poets, first appeared in 1779. . . . Sheridan's Account of Swift not 'till 1784.—See the Work, p. 449, &c.

SIGHT,* and looking into the seeds of time, saw himself in a book to be written some fifteen or twenty years to come, ycleped 'a writer of gigantic fame.' This, on the incontestible authority of a grave historian, an eye witness of the fact, who, as we may well presume, had no temptation to lying, his patron being dead and unable to pay for it; the historian himself remarkable for the same rare faculty of prescience, and so free from any partiality to Johnson, that he has even been accused of drawing him into very unfavourable situations, for the important end of swelling his Diary; † this characteristic expression, 'a writer of gigantic fame,' I say on the authority aforesaid, was an outrageous and unpardonable attack, which it was incumbent on a genius of the sage's athletic importance to repel. Corporeal notice, as meditated against the reprobated translator of Ossian, might induce unfavourable constructions, and be attended with disagreeable consequences; possibly inconvenient withal. ‡ In the instant of deliberation things suddenly took a new turn; Minerva, in the shape of the master of Auchinleck, claps my philosopher on the back, and suggests a sure and safer expedient, which was, in the fashionable phrase of modern heroism, § to reserve his fire and pay the satirical

* SECOND SIGHT. See Boswell, vol. i. p. 472, vol. ii. pp. 5, 203.

† Some fastidious commentator, versed in obsolete lore, fifteen or twenty centuries hence, may be tempted to assert, that in this passage our author had his eye on that impartial writer David Hume, who in such wise characterizes his admired fellow-labourer, Tacitus. The same Tacitus who announceth certain native burghers in the German Sea; "many men, many women, and many children," such, as 'twas averred, could write the Poems of Ossian, that hugely dismayed the Roman cohorts: He also telleth of certain northern tribes wont to hear the hissing of the waves when the Sun gets out of bed in a morning, and, on leading his nags from the stable, make a leg and wish him a good journey!!!!

‡ Boswell, vol. ii. p. 171. See this hint taken up and somewhat elucidated in the Appendix hereto subjoined. No. 1.

§ Duelling, here alluded to, is a weed of the feudal ages; the spurious offspring of chivalry, and utterly unknown in the times when Minerva was in repute.

fatirical knave in his own coin. He accedes to the admonition of the goddess, and in *terrorem* leaves in the hands of his ingenious biographer, a squib; to be kept in petto till the season meet for wreaking his revenge.

On this presumption, so agreeable to reason and truth, the affair is naturally accounted for, and the Doctor clearly exculpated; nor can any just exception possibly lie to the position, save that in some respects it impugns the notion of co-partnership, and tends to despoil Mr. Boswell of the prerogative of wit. However to accommodate matters the best we can, as the gentleman, it is by this time pretty well understood, is no enemy to celebrity at second hand, the last, we admit, is of his own manufacture, and without fraud or contest decidedly his due; yet still a doubt remains that he never would have thought of it, if Johnson had not lent him a spur.

The wit, a precious Morceau! which so forcibly marks his hero's penetration, magnanimity, and liberality of mind, that faithful historian confesses he would have suppressed, but that Sheridan, naughty man! called him pigmy; and, after seven years dreaming on the atrocious scroll, like the fretful porcupine, he bristles up his poisoned quills against the person whose worth and merit he affects to think of with respect, and darts them at his shroud. Pity! that in the paroxysm of his fury he overshot the mark, and back the devilish engine recoils upon himself. The hour of attack approaches; he appeals to the high tribunal of the public; his plea is over-ruled; there is a small flaw in the indictment; the action will not lie; culprit did not attack the illustrious sage; the illustrious sage was the assailant; Sheridan only traversed the record and took up the gauntlet for his friend Swift, when his friend's mouth

was

was stopped and could not do justice to himself. Culprit did not call Mr. Boswell pigmy; pigmy is not in the scroll; the passages we have collated, and however suitable the term, the adoption of it is his own. Sheridan makes no invidious comparisons: singles out no particular object; but in the way of contrast by corporal allusion, speaking of the junto, contents himself with saying "Little Men" *Qui capit ille facit* . . . sure Mr. Boswell is not a *little* writer; why of all mankind should he take it to himself? and why at that particular juncture should it gall him? Now, on the subject of Swift, compare Johnson and Sheridan, and say to whom justly appertains the epithet outrageous.*

The disquisition mentioned took place, if *bona fide* it did take place, in 1769. Sheridan's Life of Swift did not appear till 1784, which was the first and only instance of his writhing, if writhing Mr. Boswell will have it; but, from what has been proved, it is pretty plain others were writhing with a vengeance in the interim, and even long antecedent to that period betrayed symptoms notoriously suspicious. Johnson, struck the first blow, and pursued it with unrelenting acrimony, roused on every frivolous occasion, wickedly suggested, as the text intimates, for the space of thirty years. What were his motives? dare we say literary envy? Jealousy of a Brother's Fame? a weakness, admitting all his merits, of which that great man stands accused. Both were engaged in the same arduous task, though in somewhat a different line, the cultivation and improvement of the English Tongue. Johnson was not an orator, and had but little intercourse with the graces; therefore thought
slightingly

* Boswell, [Friday March 24, An. 1775] in his usual way, tells the world "Johnson was in high spirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and success. He attacked Swift, as he used to do upon all occasions." —Vol. ii. p. 203.—see the several accounts before adverted to.

slightingly of Sheridan's Art. Sheridan had acquired a high reputation, and was much sought after, as an adept in the institution of youth; a department in which, however kept a secret, Dr. Johnson had been tried and found wanting.* Nay possibly, very possibly, for Sheridan was no sycophant, and had a touch of his own condition, the Good Man might refuse subscription to the Great Man's dogmatic opinions, and presuming to think for himself, a way he had, disputed the Doctor's infallibility. These are not insisted upon as matters of importance; but it was known Sheridan had in contemplation an ENGLISH DICTIONARY, and the establishment of a NATIONAL ACADEMY upon the same principle, for which he was at the time soliciting patronage. That was an unequivocal avowal, and, in Johnson's imagination, an encroachment on his dictatorial consequence, which, connected with the rest, though they pursued very different routes, rankled in his mind, 'I thank thee, Boswell! for teaching me that word,' and manifestly gave offence; for in the Preface to his Dictionary, so early as the year 1755, Johnson steps out of his way, and even makes a temporary sacrifice of his political principles to have a wipe at Sheridan. Sheridan, more just to Johnson's literary reputation, overlooked the inuendo; cultivated his acquaintance, and had him at his table a constant guest. In the year 1762, Sheridan's scheme for a new English Dictionary was published. That memorable year he was nominated for a pension,† and, no way envious of his friend's celebrity, he seized the favourable opportunity; suggested the propriety of a provision for Johnson, and was the first who communicated to him the Royal Intention.§ The return Dr. Johnson made

* *Found wanting.*—See this topic farther illustrated in the Appendix No. 2.

† See Boswell's Johnson, vol. i. p. 349 . . . § *Ibid.* pp. 343, 4.

made him, and some part of Mr. Boswell's ingenious commentary, we have already seen; but for a more explicit detail we refer to the work itself.

In the interim, as we are on the subject of pensions, it may not be improper to add a few words by way of elucidation, in which we shall endeavour to follow our elaborate precursor, *haud passibus æquis*, who, notwithstanding the mighty pothier he makes to persuade us of the pains he has been at in procuring the most authentic testimony, has not been altogether exact. He has indeed been minutely circumstantial in what relates to Dr. Johnson; in what relates to Sheridan he appears not so sedulously inquisitive. Mr. Sheridan's pension was granted to him, as that writer correctly says, 'not as a player;' nor, as he incorrectly states, 'as a sufferer in the cause of government.' He was in that respect at least on a footing with Johnson. The pension was granted to Sheridan, without sollicitation, 'as the reward of his literary merit.*' Besides, Mr. Boswell should have recollected, that Sheridan was not only taken by the hand and encouraged to proceed in his Scheme of Education and his Dictionary, by his countryman, the Earl of Bute, who was then Prime Minister; but that on the same account he was recommended to his Sovereign by the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whose son, the brave Earl Percy, was his pupil, and by the powerful connections of the Hon. George Grenville, now Marquis of Buckingham, and his brother, who, under the care of their private Tutor, now an English Bishop,† made a visit to Dublin for the sole purpose

D

of

* See Mrs. Sheridan's letters annexed, particularly that dated London, November 29th, 1762. . . See also Mr. Boswell, vol. i. p. 350.

† Few are the tutors in the sister kingdom who can boast of such comfortable terminations to their pains and sollicitudes in discharge of their laborious and momentous occupation.

of profiting by Sheridan's instructions, which in a very eminent degree they confessedly did, and during their stay there were frequently his guests. His Majesty's Bounty in like manner, about the same time, was extended to a Scotch gentleman, I think Dr. Douglas, or the Rev. Mr. Home, author of the Tragedy of that name. These marks of Royal Encouragement to literary merit were not in the intention simply confined to the individuals, happily selected for the occasion, on his Majesty's Accession to the Throne; but on an impartial scale to be considered as national compliments and earnestness of Sovereign Protection to Genius in the several kingdoms of which those gentlemen were respectively natives; and were not a tax upon the national coffers, as in the case of ordinary pensions; but paid out of his Majesty's privy purse.——So ends the chapter of pensions.

To return: Sheridan is blamed for persevering resentment; we are by no means advocates for persevering resentment; but if justifiable in any case, it surely was in the case before us. Sheridan's resentment was an open honest indignation, arising from a proper sense of injurious treatment; it was spirited, not vindictive; it was repulsive, not mean. Was he again to run his head into the lion's mouth? and what was his security against savage attacks? His resentment was a measure of self-defence. Mr. Boswell says, he informed Sheridan, that Johnson would be glad to meet him amicably: on what authority he did so inform him does not appear. Where was his commission? There is no note thereof in his Diary, circumstantial as it is; no trace of any such conversation on the subject is to be found; had any thing of the kind taken place it would have been recorded. He would have made a merit of it, and, though it might have been an error in the costume, he would have marked it as an amiable trait in the character of his illustrious friend. His good intention shall

shall not be disputed; but the step was unwarranted, and the consequence at best problematical; there is no playing with edge tools. He acted officiously and deserved, what he was not unaccustomed to, a rebuff: It would not have been the first in cases very similar. The affair was Johnson's; did he ever retract his malicious insinuations? and what overtures in his own person appear towards a reconciliation? was it not rather prohibited by reiterated provocation? Boswell, kind soul! would impute it to an effect of vanity. Dr. Johnson does not simply attack his friend Sheridan's vanity; he ties him to the stake; "He feeds fat the ancient grudge he bears him"; he way-lays him; he assails him behind his back, and takes illiberal advantage of his absence to traduce and sport away his character; he attacks him in his profession; he endeavours to sap the foundation of his hard-earned fame, and to depreciate his just claims to public favour; but—"he allows him to be a good man:" that is, he indulges his spleen at Sheridan's expence, and "after a pause," to give his sarcasms their full effect, he bethinks him of a salvo. . . . "But Brutus is an honourable man." In his own case he might have thought it a sordid evasion; a forced confession wholly nugatory on the footing of worldly success. Goodness, as virtue, is its own reward, and seldom the ground of competitorship. Dr. Johnson's pension was not granted him on account of his goodness; "*the pension was granted to Johnson solely as the reward of his literary merit.*"* To what then did his negative compliment amount? The Jew may help Sheridan to an answer; his observation comes home to the occasion, though, even Johnson must admit, Sheridan was in no respect a Brother of the Tribe.

Nay,

* Lord Loughborough's words. . . Boswell, vol. i. p. 342.

Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that :
 You take my house, when you do take the prop
 That doth sustain my house ; you take my life
 When you do take the means whereby I live.

Sheridan had a family to provide for ; his means were in supposition, and, we may say, altogether depended on his estimation with the Public, which the strictures of Johnson were certainly not calculated to improve. Mr. Sheridan had great energy of mind ; he was an enthusiast in the cause of Education ; it was the favourite study of his life, and all his exertions ultimately tended to that one great object : so closely was it interwoven in his heart, that I have heard him in conversation on the subject declare to my Father, and I believe he was sincere in the declaration, however paradoxical it may seem, that he would rather see his two sons at the head of respectable Academies, as a situation the most beneficial to mankind, than one of them Prime Minister of Britain, and the other at the head of affairs in Ireland * He might be over sanguine in his projects, and, on that head it must be confessed, somewhat singular in his notions ; yet they did not spring from the littleness of a selfish ambition ; but were founded on the broad basis of public good : they might not, in vulgar acceptation, be very splendid or sublime ; they might not exactly square with the politics of his children ; but they were not, for that reason, criminal ; and to say nothing of ingratitude, was it the part of a friend so looked up to, so conversant in matters of juvenile institution as Johnson was supposed to be, to thwart his benevolent Host's generous struggles for independence ? to treat him, whom

* The eldest, Charles-Francis, was at that time Secretary at War and Member of the House of Commons in Ireland ; and the youngest, Richard-Brinsley, Representative for Stafford in England.

whom he allowed to be a good man, with derision, and to hold him up as an object for Scorn to point her slow and moving finger at? The figure is strong, and some may think the outline overcharged; but in such cases we are not to be guided merely by our own feelings; we are to have an eye to the conception and feelings of the character more immediately affected. What to one man is but matter of amusement, may be to another death. Boswell, in his Chronicle from the year 1762 to the year 1784 inclusive, no less than thirteen times introduces Mr. Sheridan, and every time for the sole purpose, it would seem, of abusing him; for almost in every instance, either directly, or by obvious implication, he is the Butt of reprehension, and his character episodically brought in as the vehicle of some illiberal reflection.

The active part he took in promoting Johnson to a pension is not absolutely denied; but in the manner of relating Boswell does all that in him lies to obscure the merit of it, and solicitously compliments all his friends with having a hand in it, even some who never pretended a claim,* to ravish the Honour from Sheridan. It rests on the concession of Lord Loughborough, though, according to the report, grudgingly obtained, and certainly void of that ingenuous openness and manly liberality which might be expected from a person of his Lordship's exalted station and character. And, to borrow a favourite phrase of Boswell's, 'It is but just to add,' that the part Johnson acted on the occasion was affectedly scrupulous; shilly, shally; he would and he would not; more in the style of a wayward, squeamish, young

* It has been asserted on respectable authority, that Mr. Murphy never assumed to himself the distinction of being the prime mover, as alleged, in the business of the pension to Johnson.

young spinster on the point of preferment, than a dignified sage. . . . Mr. Boswell tells us "the Earl of Bute, then Prime Minister, had the honour to announce this instance of his Sovereign's bounty." * Two or three pages farther on, "Sheridan communicated to Johnson that a pension was granted to him," and from the great pensioner's remarkable and pointed reply, it is as clear as the clearest proposition in Euclid, this was the first time the welcome tidings reached his ears, † A venial slip of Mr. Boswell's; perhaps intentional, to support a disputed title, on the principle of a well known proverb, great wits have short memories. An apology the more requisite as this seems not the only slip of the kind. In the same page (as we have seen him) confessing his chagrin, at an affair which happened two and twenty years after, and relapsing into a smile, when the evil spirit had departed from him, he represents his very kind friend as the life and soul of society; for, as he says, "Sheridan's well-informed, animated and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate." Some few pages afterwards he adopts a quite contrary sentiment, and with a visible kind of glee represents him as little better than a driveller—"Why Sherry is dull; naturally dull . . . such an excess of stupidity is not in nature." But this was the response of his Oracle, and, we may suppose, like the oracles of old, verbal quirks and subterfuges never wanting to evade the charge of contradiction. The disabilities of Sheridan, 'who no revenue had but his good spirits to feed and clothe him,' are heavily laid, and roundly asserted. If just, it could not be for the agreeable amusement of his company or conversation that Johnson so constantly frequented his table. And if unfounded, what becomes of his vaunted attachment to truth? In the common accidents of life there are no great temptations to its violation,

* See Boswell, vol. i. p. 341. † Ibid p. 344.

violation, and, when a character is obtained, it serves excellently as a stalking horse; if it answered his purpose, well; but in the present instance among others it may be seen, that when calumny and detraction was the theme he could let loose the rein, and without ceremony tread down the fences.* On his rupture with Sheridan, to bring him into company where he *was not* might be an expedient to collect parties for his lonely evenings, and, no doubt, set the table in a roar. His Biographer, a constant attendant, we may also perceive, had the knack of playing into his hand; and it must be allowed, was a strenuous croupier.† In brief, for to trace him through all his doublings and eccentricities would be an Herculean task, not an incident recorded to

Sheridan's

* Dr. Johnson was fond of arguing for victory, and would espouse either side of the question, right or wrong, to foil his adversary; a practice hardly to be justified on moral principles, and often repugnant to the interests of truth; a contrary conduct might have been less entertaining and not so favourable to the splendor of talents;

But of the two, less dangerous is the offence
To tire our patience than mislead our sense.

POPE.

A practice that trenches on the laws of sincerity is hardly compatible with an inviolable regard to truth; arguing for arguing's sake is children's play, squabbling for the love of noise: arguing for victory has a more dangerous aspect; 'tis like going to war for the sake of killing; a curious way of proving a humane and peaceable disposition. A mode of jesting so like earnest, may lead to very serious mistakes, and tho' the jest be discovered, the impression indelibly remains. Dr. Johnson, it must be allowed, was a great light, a shining light, but like other shining lights, if implicitly followed, may prove an *ignis fatuus*, and, ouch! you go into a ditch.

† Croupier [croopier] of which I know not the etymology. A word current in Ireland (on that account perhaps, omitted by Johnson) a name of office among the bon vivants at the festivals of Bacchus, given to the person seated at the opposite end of the table to assist the toast-master. His duty is to circulate the bottle, and see that the gentlemen of his *squad* do justice to the toast.—Bailey has a word very near akin. . . . Crouper [at a gaming-house] accented on the first syllable, One who watches the cards and gathers money for the bank or stake-tray. It is said to have been the occupation of a distinguished Commoner, and not beneath the acceptance of a Right Honourable. But in scandalous chronicle it no where appears our Biographer flourished in that department.

Sheridan's advantage, but is guarded with some cautionary restriction and coupled with clauses of abatement; some invidious glance at his person, his talents, his mode of life, or profession; the adoption of which 'tis well known Sheridan himself often lamented as matter of necessity not wantonly of choice; and, far from meaning a reproach, it is but justice to add, that to the same unrelenting Task-Mistress, Necessity, the world is indebted for the labours of Johnson, which drew forth those volumes of his life, in which irreconcilable enmity appears the leading feature of his conduct towards his old friend, Sheridan, throughout.

If there be an exception, it is a paragraph in the 3d volume, inserted as part of a desultory conversation said to have taken place in the year 1779, in which Sheridan's character, as a man of merit, is favourably exhibited; nevertheless, even there, a smatch of the old leven is perceivable. The subject is introduced without any apparent connection, and a compliment to him seemingly intended; but the essence of it is done away, being connected with circumstances of dubious complexion, and founded on a Fact for which there is no authority. Boswell or Johnson, *Latet anguis in herba*. Let the impartial reader determine; the documents, though not numerous, are sufficient. From an attention to which also, it must evidently follow that Mr. Boswell's claims to scrupulous authenticity, at least in this instance, are not unexceptionably founded. The originals might have been examined, without running half over London; and personal information was always at hand.

Boswell, speaking of Johnson, says—"He observed his
 " old friend, Mr. Sheridan, had been honoured with extra-
 " ordinary attention in his own country, by having had an ex-
 " ception made in his favour in an Irish Act of Parliament
 " concerning Insolvent Debtors. Thus to be singled out,"
 said

said he, "by a Legislature, as an object of public consideration and kindness, is a proof of no common merit."* [p. 171.]

Not to indulge a captious disposition, at the first blush this paragraph betrays something of a contradiction; for even on the high authority alledged Johnson's unqualified admission of his old friend's uncommon merit is scarcely reconcileable to that excess of stupidity denounced, as noticed a page or two before, in his oracular capacity. However, taken naked as it stands, the eulogium is speciously advanced, and on slight grounds we should not deny him the credit of it; involved with other circumstances, as previously observed, it has something in it of an equivocal nature, and comparing

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it

* This affair is erroneously taken up in the same light by Davies in his Life of Garrick. Boswell often speaks of Davies as a learned and ingenious Writer for whom Dr. Johnson had a particular kindness, by whose advice and encouragement he undertook that pleasing monument to the memory of our English Roscius. But though it is not wholly free from partiality, natural enough in a Biographer, to his Hero, he has not raised a magnificent colossus to him on the broken statues of his contemporaries; when the subject leads him to mention Mr. Sheridan, his great master's competitor and rival, he speaks with ingenuous freedom, and not for the invidious purpose of dragging him into ludicrous notice. The following is the paragraph particularly alluded to, which will bring the Reader more intimately acquainted with Mr. Sheridan's true character, and in some measure counteract the poison of Boswell.

"This gentleman [Mr. Sheridan] had been long esteemed a man of eminence in his profession, and notwithstanding Mr. Garrick's great reputation for acting, some criticks did not scruple to compare, nay, prefer Sheridan's performance of certain capital characters, such as Macbeth, Hamlet, &c. to the other's utmost efforts in those parts."

"But indeed the Manager's own jealousy justified the public good opinion of Mr. Sheridan's ability; though certainly there was a wide difference between their several pretensions; neither in person or voice had nature been very kind to the latter. But his judgment, his learning,

and

it with the general tenour of his assertions, a doubt arises whether it was seriously or ironically intended. As the matter stands wholly insulated, there is no forming any judgment from the context; but it comes in a questionable shape, and must rest solely on its own intrinsic merits. In that light it is unluckily featured, and bears confutation on the face of it. If insolvent acts were calculated generally for the punishment, not relief, of unfortunate defaulters, the story of a clause of exception in favour of an individual might carry weight; but Johnson was too conversant in parliamentary usage to be imposed on, which makes it difficult to conceive, if the discourse be fairly stated, that he meant it seriously. "Somebody, to rouse Johnson, might wickedly "have said it," and that was his method of retorting. He always disputed Sheridan's merits, for which no doubt he had his reasons, and on a supposition that he thought it merely a speculation of his old friend's partizans, a report fabricated

and close application to study, compensated in some degree for the want of external advantages. His manner, though certainly not very pleasing, was supposed to be his own, and not borrowed from an imitation of others. He had besides the advantage of an excellent character in private life. *Sheridan had the peculiar honour, when absent from Ireland, to be distinguished by the legislature of his country, as a man whose particular interest was worthy of their care and attention.* . . . Mr. Garrick soon found that his engagement with this actor was of very great advantage to him. Little difference in the bulk of audiences was to be perceived when they acted separately the parts of Hamlet and Richard, or any other capital characters. The Manager himself owned that, except Barry, he had never found so able an assistant; for the best of them he said, would not draw together a hundred pound audience; but Garrick's ruling passion was the love of fame, and his uneasiness arising from the success of Sheridan began every day to be more and more visible," which we find, by Mr. Davies's Account, terminated in a total separation not much to the honour or advantage of the Manager.

Davies's Life of Garrick, vol. i. pp. 300, 1. London printed 1784, 2 vol. 4th edit. the first edition bears date April 22, 1780.

fabricated to enhance his character, the sarcasm comes pointed with double force. No Gentleman of information, particularly from Ireland, could consider it as complimentary; for, improbabilities apart, it rests upon a Fact to which, had any such existed, they could not be strangers. It must have been an affair of public notoriety, open to inspection; but in truth no such exception is on record. The particular Act alluded to, and the Journals of the House of Commons, printed by authority, are now under consultation, and no vestiges of any such exception are to be met with in either. Whatever gave birth to it, the story as related is fictitious, and can do no honour to the memory of Mr. Sheridan in the estimation of any intelligent person who really respected him. His merit stood in no need of meretricious varnish or adventitious support; the Public were in full possession of it; but the kindness he experienced was the kindness of private friendship. The effort of One who seldom let an opportunity of serving those for whom he professed a friendship escape him. The subject has been already touched upon,* which as a literary anecdote a few incontrovertible facts will more satisfactorily elucidate; they are extracted from my Father's papers, and are faithful to the Original.

JOURNALS of the HOUSE of COMMONS, Vol. xiv. } Page 207 †
Martis, 11 die Martii, 1766.

" A Petition of *Samuel Whyte* and other principal Creditors of Thomas Sheridan, Esq. was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the said Thomas Sheridan, late Manager of the Theatre in Smock-alley, having contracted several debts which he was unable to answer, was obliged to quit the kingdom, from the persecution of some of his Creditors,

who

* See WHYTE'S POEMS: Notes and Illustrations, p. 297.

† In the edit. of 1771. . . . in a subsequent Edition, viz. in that of 1782, page 229, where Petitioner's name is inaccurately spelled, *White*.

who refused to sign a Letter of Licence, by which he is cut off from every prospect of paying his debts, or providing for his family. And praying, that the said Thomas Sheridan may have such protection and relief as to the House shall seem meet."

" Ordered, that the said Petition be referred to the said Committee."

This was entirely a voluntary measure of the Petitioner, without the participation or even knowledge of Mr. Sheridan, who, for the reasons set forth in the Petition, had retired with his family to Blois in France. The situation of his affairs, though greatly deranged, had not deprived him of every resource; he had still a Friend, who, not unconscious of the difficulties in his way, entertained hopes of finding, one day or other, the means of restoring him to his country. At length an opportunity seemed to present itself. A Bill was brought into Parliament for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors under certain limitations. Petitions poured into the House from every quarter; but Mr. Sheridan's absence, at so remote a distance, rendered it impossible, had he been ever so much inclined, to take advantage of the occasion. The Bill was some time pending, and Petitioner, who had preconcerted his plan, waited its progress with silent expectation; for he knew Mr. Sheridan, in consequence of his critical situation, had many enemies, and some very indiscreet friends, whose officiousness might prove as detrimental as the machinations of his adversaries; both of which were to be guarded against; he therefore, for fear of accidents, kept close his intentions, and postponed his application to the last hour, that those whom he suspected inimical might not have time to unite their forces and make head against him. Tuesday, March 11, was the day fixed for the final Resolution of the House.

House. On the Sunday morning preceding, Petitioner went to Bellingham Boyle, Esq; of Rathfarnham Castle, whose kind partiality he had long experienced, and for the first time opened his design. Mr. Boyle listened to it with his accustomed cordiality, and very much applauded the intention, but did not flatter him with great expectation of success; for he imagined it would meet with a powerful opposition, and the time was too short to secure a party to carry it through. Petitioner earnestly remonstrated, and explained his motives for the delay, which Mr. Boyle, upon consideration, thinking feasible, he proposed to consult Mr. Tisdall [the Attorney General] and a few more of the leading Members, to whom Petitioner was well known, and promised, as soon as possible, to apprize him of the result. The succeeding evening, at a very late hour, he was summoned to attend at the Chambers of Mr. Fitzgerald, Judge of the Admiralty, where he found the Attorney General, the Provost, Mr. Boyle, and six or seven Members more, in consultation. Having satisfied them in some points touching the business in question, they gave him instructions to prepare a Petition to be presented to the House early the next day, and, as they had no doubt Mr. Sheridan had many well-wishers among his Creditors, directed him to get it signed by as many of them as he could, which, seeing the business in train, and his example, a joint and equal sufferer, before them, it was supposed none of them would refuse.

Here indeed he met with the most mortifying disappointments; for, though all those he judged it prudent to confide in, declared themselves satisfied of Mr. Sheridan's probity and good intentions, and acknowledged, without reserve, that the particulars were fairly and honestly stated, he could

not procure a single name in addition to his own to countenance the application. George Faulkner, whom he looked upon as his sheet anchor, was the first that excused himself.† The morning being wasted in fruitless solicitations, no time was to be lost; the Petition, in its original conception, which was merely a rough draft hastily made out, and crude as it obviously must be, was delivered to Mr. Boyle, who, though a strenuous and active colleague, was no speaker, and he committed it to Mr. Fitzgerald. That Gentleman, in a very happily-conceived speech, recommended it to the House; the celebrated Charles Lucas, M. D. Representative for Dublin, Petitioner's most intimate Friend, seconded the motion, which was warmly supported by Mr. Adderley. It passed unanimously The Petitioner to attend the Committee on Thursday the last of their sitting.

JOHN MONCK MASON, Esq. in the Chair.

The late Lord Viscount Doneraile, and the present Lord Viscount Northland, his earliest and most steady patrons, then in the Commons, received him at the door, and taking him by the hand announced him to the Committee, saying, "Here comes the worthy Petitioner for Mr. Sheridan." This was an encouraging reception, and the prelude to a more signal instance of favour in the sequel. Standing at the foot of the table, the Book, as is the usage, was handed to him; but the test of an Affidavit was dispensed with.

Mr. Tottenham immediately rose, and addressing the Chair, expatiated at some length on the purport of the Petition before them, and the extraordinary circumstance of its introduction to the House. A Creditor petitioning the Legislature in behalf of his Debtor, he observed, was very much out of the usual course, and the single instance of the kind,
he

† Something more of this Gentleman in a subsequent page.

he believed, that ever solicited the attention of Parliament. Among other encomiums, of which he was by no means sparing, he said, it was a spirited and laudable exertion of friendship, evidently proceeding from a disinterested principle, and in his opinion merited particular consideration and respect; adding, "*I therefore move you, that Petitioner shall not be put to his OATH; but the Facts set forth in his Petition be admitted simply on his word.*" His motion was seconded by an instantaneous, Ay! Ay! without a dissenting voice. A few questions were then put, purely as it were for form's sake, and Petitioner was dismissed with repeated testimonies of applause and congratulations of success.

The Creditors, most likely, either did not wish or imagine he would carry his point; for when they found the business effected, they appeared in a combination to abuse him; and not only reproached him for meddling, as they called it, but affected to look upon him as responsible to them for the whole of their respective demands; because, as they alledged, he had without their concurrence had recourse to Parliament to their prejudice, and deprived them of the means of prosecuting their just claims. Some of them actually consulted counsel, and took steps for the purpose of compelling him to pay them out of his own pocket. The idea may be now laughed at; but the thing was very seriously menaced: and in his situation, unhackneyed as he was in the ways of men;* of a profession too of all others the most exposed to anxiety and trouble, with at best very inadequate compensation, it must have been an accumulated grievance, and their vindictive malice not a little alarming.

Mr. Sheridan's subsequent letters on the subject, now in the Editor's hands, at the same time that they more clearly
explain

* He was of a retired habit; just turned of thirty, and scarcely eight years conversant in business.

explain and corroborate the facts, remain a decisive testimony of his principles, and reflect a genuine lustre on his character as a Husband, a Father, a moral Man, and a Christian.

To Mr. Samuel Whyte, Master of the English Grammar-School, in Grafton-street, Dublin. Via Londres, Angleterre.

DEAR SAM!

YOUR long-expected letter has at length arrived without date. You mention in it that it was writ the post after Mr. Sheen's, but by some strange fatality it has been six weeks longer in its passage. I own your long silence astonished me, and raised in me many mortifying reflections. The general neglect which I experienced from all quarters in my distressed situation, created in me such an apathy for all the affairs of this life, that I was almost brought to wish to pass the rest of my days

Oblitusque meorum obliviscendus et illis.

But your last has shewn me that friendship is not wholly banished from the earth. I find that it is to your care solely I am indebted for the turn my affairs have taken, and it pleased me the more, as you are the only person living to whom I would wish to owe such an obligation. Your silence during the transaction carries its excuse with it. It was better on every account that the attempt should be made without my privity. And to deal ingenuously with you, had you consulted me, I should never have consented to it. But as the thing has passed with so much credit to me, the whole honour and merit of it is yours. What I mentioned in a former, relative to an act of Parliament, had no reference to any such act to be made in Ireland, of which I had not the least idea; but to an English act passed the sessions before for the relief of insolvent debtors, with the nature
of

of which I desired to be made acquainted. . . . You have not made me acquainted with the circumstances of the act, in which, through your friendly and disinterested exertions, I am concerned; nor mentioned the time that it will be proper for me to go to Ireland. I should be glad you would take the first opportunity of conveying a copy of the act to Mr. Chamberlaine, because there are some points on which I would take advice in London, before my setting out for Dublin. And now, my dear SAM! I must tell you, that without your farther assistance it will be impossible for me to reap the benefit of what you have done for me. From the perpetual fluctuation in the ministry, the payments are no longer punctual at the Treasury. There is now due to me a year of my pension; and at the moment I am writing to you I am reduced to my last Louis. I had relied upon receiving about fifty pound from Sheen, for the books and a year's rent of a certain farm at Quilca. But this I find, without any notice given me, has been forestalled, and Sheen writes me word that he has not a shilling to spare. I had before applied to some friends in England, who had made large professions to me; but I find, by an obstinate silence on their part, that nothing is to be expected from them. My sole reliance at present is upon you; nor should I have the least doubt on me, if your abilities were equal to your good will. But I must conjure you by all that is sacred in friendship to raise a hundred pounds for me, as speedily as you can, and convey it to William Whately, Esq; Banker in London, for my use; on the receipt of which I will immediately set out for England in my way to Dublin. Mrs. Sheridan and the Children will continue in France, 'till my affairs are settled; and after that you may rely upon it that this is the first debt I shall think myself bound to discharge. I need not

say more upon this head; I am sure your utmost endeavours will not be wanting to serve me in this exigence, and to complete what you have so well begun.

And now I must give you some account of what we have been doing since our arrival at Blois. I have long since finished the Dictionary, and have got together the greatest part of the materials for the Grammar, which only want being reduced into order. I have likewise almost finished a volume of Dialogues on the English Language, to serve as a preparative for the other work. The more I reflect on the general use which must be made of this work wherever English is taught, the more I am convinced that the profits of it will be considerable; and that if I keep the right of the Copy to myself (which is my design) it will be an estate to my family. I have finished a Grammar too in English and French, for the use of all foreigners who understand French, that are desirous of attaining a knowledge of the English tongue by an easy and short method. I have also drawn up a Grammar in English to facilitate the attainment of the French tongue to all who speak English; a work much wanted, and which I began at first for the use of my children, upon finding the great imperfection of all hitherto published with that view. Mrs. Sheridan has writ a comedy called a Trip to Bath, in which some good judges in England find a great deal of merit. She has also made two additional volumes to the Memoirs of Sidney, and has begun a Tragedy in prose upon part of the story contained in this latter part. Thus you see, that, together with the time employed in the instruction of the children, we have not been idle since our arrival here. Our coming to Blois has been attended with the happy circumstance of restoring Mrs. Sheridan to a perfect good state of health, a blessing which she had not known
for

for ten years before; and this alone would make me think it a fortunate event which drove us hither. But I have other reasons to bless this event. It has afforded me an opportunity of acquiring two of the most useful kinds of knowledge, which one can be possessed of in this life; I mean a knowledge of the world, and a knowledge of myself. To know the world well, one must cease to be an actor in the busy scene of life, and be contented to be an humble spectator; and to know one's self well, long uninterrupted leisure for self-examination, at a distance from the turbulence and seductions of the world, is essentially necessary. The result of my reflections with regard to the world has been the same with that of the wise man, that it is, Vanity of Vanities. But I have not like him ended my enquiries there. My mind could never rest in so dispiriting a conclusion; it naturally led me to the consideration of another life, where all that is amiss here will be rectified. And after the most unprejudiced enquiries, I remained in the full conviction, that it is from RELIGION alone that we can hope for contentment in this life, or happiness in a future one: and the result of my self-examination was, a determined resolution to make her sacred dictates the guide of all my future actions. Don't think, SAM! that either superstition or melancholy have had the least influence on this occasion, for I have not a grain of either in my composition; it has been the effect of a long, cool, deliberate train of reflection.

I am sorry I was not before made acquainted with the very kind part which Mr. Boyle took in my affairs. I fear a letter, after so great a distance of time, would appear with but an ill grace: I must therefore beg you will take it upon yourself to make him my most grateful acknowledgments, and at the same time the apology for my silence. You do not say a word about Mrs. Whyte, nor your Boy. Do you think

think we are indifferent with regard to what concerns you? Assure Mr. and Mrs. Guinness of my warmest regards and best wishes. I did intend to return a few lines in answer to the obliging ones which she added to yours, but you see the paper is finished. I am ever sincerely

and affectionately yours,

Blois, August 1st, 1766.

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

This letter affords indubitable proof of the Writer's great reliance on his Friend; and the following will equally evince his Friend was no temporizer; and that his attention to Mr. Sheridan, or his alacrity to serve him, neither distance of situation, nor change of circumstances, abated.

TO MR. SAMUEL WHYTE, IN GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.

SIR,

London, 13th August, 1766.

I HAVE received your favour of the 9th, with a Bill on Messrs. Ker and co. for £25. . . which shall be passed to the account of Mr. Sheridan as desired. I am, for Messrs. Castells, and myself,

Sir, your most humble servant,

WILLIAM WHATELY.

SIR,

London, 17th September, 1766.

I HAVE received your favour of the 11th, with a Bill on Mr. Clarke for £75. . . which shall be placed to the account of Mr. Thomas Sheridan. I am, for Messrs. Castells, and myself,

Sir, your most humble servant,

Aug. 9th. Rem. 25 : 0 : 0

WILLIAM WHATELY.

Sep. 11th. do. . 75 : 0 : 0

Total £100 : 0 : 0 Brit. Curr.

*To Mr. Samuel Whyte, Master of the English Grammar-School,
in Grafton-street, Dublin. Via Londres, Angleterre.*

Paris, October 13th, 1766.

OFTEN have I sat down to write to you an account of the most fatal event that could befall me in this life, and as often have thrown aside the pen. Oh, my dear SAM! the most excellent of women is no more. Her apparent malady was an intermitting fever, attended with no one bad symptom, 'till the day before her death, when she was suddenly deprived of her senses, and all the fatal prognosticks of a speedy dissolution appeared. She died the death of the righteous, without one pang, without a groan. The extraordinary circumstances attending her case made me resolve to have her opened: when it was found that the whole art of medicine could not have prolonged her days, as all the noble parts were attacked, and any one of four internal maladies must have proved mortal. If the news of this event has not yet reached Dublin, break it to my Sister as gently as you can. I set out from this in a few days for St. Quintin, a town about half way between this and Calais, where I purpose to leave my Children, in the hands of Protestants, to whom they are strongly recommended. As soon as I have settled them, I shall set out for London, and thence proceed to Dublin as speedily as possible. I thank you for your last letter and the remittance, without which I should not have been able to have made this arrangement.—SAM! you have lost a Friend who valued you much. I have lost what the world cannot repair, a bosom Friend, another self. My children have lost—Oh their Loss is neither to be expressed nor repaired. But the will of God be done.

I am ever sincerely

and affectionately yours,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

It

It is a just remark of Dr. Johnson's, that "many things which are false are transmitted from book to book and gain credit in the world," an observation which comes home to the experience of most intelligent readers, and has been abundantly verified in the case of Mr. Sheridan. The preceding facts speak for themselves, and the documents will hardly be disputed. In a former page of this volume, it is said, that he died at Margate, Thursday, August the 16th.* This is an error of the press, it should be Thursday, August the 14th, 1788. He had performed a long and difficult part in the eye of the Public, and his final exit was not unnoticed. Memoirs of the late Thomas Sheridan, Esq; appeared in the European Magazine for the months of September,† October,† November,† and December,† subsequent; stating in the first instance, according to custom, the supposed particulars of his birth and parentage, as follows:

"Thomas Sheridan was the eldest son of Dr. Thomas Sheridan, an eminent divine and schoolmaster, but more celebrated as the friend and companion of Dean Swift, by Miss Macpherson, daughter of a Scots gentleman. He was born at Quilca, a place which to future times will acquire a degree of importance, as the residence of Swift, and the birth-place of most of Mr. Sheridan's family; particularly the author of the School for Scandal.‡"—And in a prior publication, containing Memoirs of Richard-Brinsley Sheridan, that gentleman is described as "the eldest son of Thomas Sheridan and Frances his wife, born at Quilca near Dublin."

These memoirs were republished verbatim in different places, particularly in the Edinburgh and Dublin Magazines;

the

* WHYTE'S POEMS, p. 298.—† Eur. Mag. pp. 210, 274, 325, 498.

‡ See also Biographia Dramatica, article Sheridan.

the latter by Pat. Byrne, bookseller, Grafton-street.
 It must be presumed that the Compiler proceeded on the best information he could collect; but his information was not authentic. Mrs. Knowles, Mr. Sheridan's youngest and only surviving Sister, who at the time presided over an eminent Boarding-School for young Ladies in York-street, was consulted as to the facts, and her account, which cannot be controverted, ran widely different.

his Thomas Sheridan was not the first-born of their Parents; her brother Richard being upwards of three years his senior, whose eldest Son of the same name, late a King's Counsel, and Member for Charlemont, was present at the relation. The name of the Doctor's first-born son was James, who died young and was buried in St. Mary's Church-yard, August 22d, 1724, as appears by the Register; consequently Thomas was his third son. Neither was their Mother's maiden name Macpherfon, nor was she of Scotch extraction. Her name was Elizabeth Macfadden, the only child of an Irish gentleman of the Province of Ulster. Mrs. Knowles could not see the propriety of distinguishing Quilca as the settled residence of Swift, more than Sir Arthur Acheson's, Mr. Matthews's, Mr. Hamilton's, or any other place where he might have been an invited guest, or for a few months occasionally accommodated: and setting down Quilca as the birth-place of her brother Thomas, or any of his family, was void of all foundation; for her Mother and Sister were remarkably timid on those occasions, and invariably fixed on the Capital, where they were in the way of more immediate and better assistance than could be expected in the country. Her brother Thomas, as well as herself, and the rest of the Doctor's children, were born in Capel-street, in King James's
 mint-

mint-house, as it was called, where her Father held his school;* and her brother Tom's third son, Richard-Brinsley, author of the *School for Scandal*, was born at his Father's house in Dorset-street, Dublin, where his eldest son Thomas, who died in childhood, Charles-Francis, and his eldest daughter, were also born; and all his children, except the youngest daughter, who was born in Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, London, were baptized in St. Mary's Church, where likewise the Doctor her Father's children all received their Baptism. This account is confirmed by the Register, to be seen in the Church books of St. Mary's, Dublin,† which could not well have been the case had they been born at Quilca; a journey of about fifty English miles from Dublin, and not, as asserted, in the neighbourhood of that Metropolis.

Without entering into other matters, there are some things to be corrected in the story told of George Faulkner, of ostentatious memory, which but ill squares with his conduct on a former occasion mentioned, and seems more calculated for eclat, than consistent with the Fact.‡ His relinquishing his securities, were it really the case, two years after the power of enforcing them had been superseded, was but an empty compensation for refusing his Name when it might have been of use; but the Alderman knew Printers, and Printers knew him. The paragraph told prettily, and he obtained the Feather. *Quiescant mortui!* . . . The business was done without him.||

Mr.

* See an account of the former and present state of this ancient Edifice after the Table of Contents. *WHYTE'S POEMS*, p. viii. . . . A plate of which is given, as a Tail-piece, at the end of the first poem called the Theatre, or Mirrour for Youth addicted to the Theatre-Mania.

† Extract from the Register of St. Mary's Parish, Dublin. Charles-Francis, son of Thomas and Frances Sheridan, baptized July 23d, 1750—Richard-Brinsley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, baptized November 4th, 1751.

‡ See a specimen of this worthy Alderman's kindness, page 30, line 2.

|| The paragraph alluded to, which was omitted in the former Edition, is added in a subsequent page, with a few cursory remarks, of which some of our readers suggested the propriety.

Mr. Sheridan arrived in Dublin, from France, in the month of October, 1766, and, as the Act directs, appeared in Court during the Term to take the benefit of it in form. Very shortly after, having no scheme of secreting his property, a trick too common on such occasions, a meeting of his Creditors was called by public advertisement, and the remains of his fortune, which chiefly consisted of surplus rents arising from a certain farm at Quilca, which he had formerly purchased from his eldest brother, and had in his difficulties mortgaged to a brother-in-law, was vested in three of the Creditors,* in trust for the whole, who, without let or molestation, permitted him the free enjoyment of the same till his death. Some months after Quilca was advertised to be sold,† and the purchase money was honourably appropriated, upon an average of the outstanding debts, to the purpose of discharging them. . . . No dirty expedient was attempted to evade payment,‡ though at the interval of

G

two

* Tho. Adderly, Esq. M.P. Robert Birch of Turvey, Esq. M.P. and Wm. Lefanu, Esq. who was the principal agent, and honourably, as on every other occasion thro' an exemplary life of 86 years, discharged the trust reposed in him. The two last of whom were living when these Remarks were first published; Mr Birch is now the only survivor——April 3d, 1798.

† The Equity of Redemption rather, Anno 1789; which brought about 65ol. subject to the mortgage, which devolved to the mortgagee's daughter, who now enjoys the issues and profits.

‡ This passage is literally transcribed from the Author's MS. It is feelingly given from his own personal experience in other cases, to which it manifestly alludes. The Items, not trifling nor a few, are on his Books; upwards of fifteen hundred pounds for board and tuition. . . £1500!!! liberal education truly, with a witness. It was not in that way my FATHER showed his gratitude to the worthy preceptor of his youth; knowing a considerable sum for his board and instruction had been suffered to accumulate, when he came of age he called for the account, and, adding the interest, discharged the whole to the uttermost farthing. This decided proof of his pupil's honour and integrity the good old gentleman

two and twenty years, no interest during that time having been paid or called for, the statute of limitation might have been pleaded in full force; the Creditors were publicly apprized of the intended distribution, and every claimant, duly producing vouchers, received his dividend respectively apportioned.

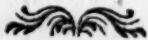
In a Work of considerable merit and utility, which lately issued from the American Press, it is recorded, under the head of Eminent Men, that "the Rev. Doctor Thomas Sheridan, of Ireland, Author of the English Dictionary, Works on Elocution, &c. died August 14th, 1788." Here Father and Son are evidently confounded. . . . Well! and what matter, cries his Worship in fits; he sees no occasion for such *great minuteness*: What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba? Very true, Sir! and is the Sneer less applicable to your Alexanders and your Cæsars, those Gods on Earth, who have been hung up to posterity on as disputable authority, and to as little purpose?—An honest man's the noblest work of God.—He is an example proper for imitation, and such alone are worthy of commemorating. Pope on the various pursuits of mankind, among others, speaking of your Heroes and your Politicians, comes precisely to the point:

But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat,

'Tis phrase absurd to call a VILLAIN great.

September 5, 1796.

gentleman on his death-bed pathetically inculcated to his children, whom, in that awful crisis, he recommended to his care. They are living, and take pleasure in testifying the facts. One instance of the like kind, and but one in the course of forty years, my FATHER has experienced in his own practice.



E X T R A C T S
AND
ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS,
ALLUDED TO IN THE COURSE OF THE REMARKS
ON BOSWELL'S JOHNSON;
INCLUDING THE
REAL HISTORY OF THE GOLD MEDAL
GIVEN TO THE AUTHOR OF THE
TRAGEDY OF DOUGLAS.

OUR Author* in his Observations concerning Imitation, quoting a passage from Lord Roscommon, opposes it to a similar passage in the Essay on Criticism by our English Homer. Pope, he remarks, on the Structure of Poetic Numbers, lays down the following rule :

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound should be an echo to the sense."

Essay on Criticism, verse 364.

The last line, with the alteration of a single word, is evidently borrowed from the noble Peer; not perhaps with the usual felicity of great genius, which is to improve upon the original. The idea of making the sound a comment or echo to the sense is coeval with poetry itself; a doctrine founded in nature and clearly demonstrable on the principles of harmony and good taste, we may add too, a doctrine universally received as orthodox, till of late combated by Dr. Johnson and a few of his implicit disciples. It is a favourite subject
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* MR. WHYTE. . . Preliminary Essay to his POEMS, new Edit. p. lv.

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of

* MR. WHYTE . . . Preliminary Essay to his POEMS, new Edit. p. lv.

of Sheridan's, and for that very reason, as it appears, fastidiously, and I will say ungratefully, opposed by Johnson, whom Sheridan in the day of emergency had essentially served.* The circumstance could not be obliterated; but as the sense of obligation is painful to some minds, from a false conceit of something in it humiliating, it was a perpetual blister to the Doctor, which, whenever the name of Sheridan was but glanced at, irritated his sarcastic disposition, and was the real ground of that irreconcilable difference which latterly subsisted between them. . . . This may sound harsh to the memory of that great Moralist, but (both have paid the debt of nature) it is simply doing justice to the other, which indeed is virtually granted, though it must be observed with manifest reluctance, by Boswell himself. Boswell in his ardour for Johnson generally uses the name of Sheridan invidiously, and for the most part ignorantly or wilfully mistakes facts, and misrepresents the man.† The Writer speaks from his own knowledge, and especially as to two, the most considerable instances, wherein he himself was the principal Agent. *Quæ ipse miserrima vidi, et quorum pars magna fui*, (b. c.) One of the instances alluded to is in another

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, 3 vols. Lond. 1793, 2d Edit. vol. i. pp. 341, 2. That Journalist on the head of Johnson's Pension tells us, "The Earl of Bute, who was then Prime Minister, had the honour to announce this instance of his Sovereign's Bounty, &c." and p. 343, 44, acknowledging on the concession of Lord Loughborough, that Sheridan was the PRIME MOVER of the Business, says "and it is but just to add, that Mr. Sheridan told me, that when he communicated to Dr. Johnson that a Pension was to be granted to him, he replied in a fervour of gratitude, *The English Language does not afford me terms adequate to my feelings on this occasion. I must have recourse to the French. I am pénétré with his Majesty's goodness.* . . . When I repeated this to Dr. Johnson he did not contradict it."

BOSWELL.

† Ibid. pp. (a) 349, 50, 51, 52, 53; 417; 543; 581; 589. Vol. ii. pp. 16. (b) 204, 5; 364. Vol. iii. pp. (c) 171; 470; 476; 594, &c.

another place transiently taken up;* the other, as an anecdote connected with the literary history of the times, shall now be related.

Dr. Johnson affected to dislike the Tragedy of Douglas, which, as Boswell says, "He called a foolish Play," partly, we may suppose, from national prejudice, being written by a Scotchman, and partly because, as he had heard, it was wonderfully admired by his friend Sheridan, whom, as Boswell gives it from the Doctor's own mouth, "he wantonly and insolently treated in a coffee-house at Oxford, because he presented its Author with a Gold Medal;" which Johnson quaintly enough phrases "counterfeiting Apollo's coin."—There is something suspicious in the story of this puny gasconade.—Sheridan was not remarkably pacific in cases of insults offered; for, adopting the words of Hamlet, his favourite character, he might justly say of himself, *though I am not splenetic and rash, yet have I in me something dangerous, which let thy wisdom fear.*† And as to the circumstance of the Medal it would seem both the Doctor and Biographer were but partially informed. When the Tragedy of Douglas first came out, Mr. Sheridan, then Manager of the Dublin Theatre, received a printed copy of it from London, which having, according to custom, previously read to his company, he cast for representation; for it is true he highly admired it, and apprized the performers, it was his intention to give the author his third nights, as if the play had been originally brought out at his own house; an unprecedented act of liberality in the Manager, which, it was thought, would be wonderfully productive

* WHYTE'S POEMS, new Edition. . . . Notes on the Theatre or Mirrour for Youth addicted to the Theatro-Mania, p. 297.

† Witness the well-known affair of Kelly's Riot, as it was called, detailed by VICTOR, and HITCHCOCK, and noticed in a subsequent page.

productive to the Author. The first night, as the play had received the sanction of a British audience, the house was crammed, and the second night kept pace with the first. The printers mean while were not idle; it now issued from the Irish press, and unfortunately for the poor Author, a dissenting Clergyman, with an ecclesiastical anathema against him annexed. Things instantly took a new turn; the play was reprobated, and considered as a profanation of the clerical character; a faction was raised against it, and the third night, which was expected to be an overflow, fell miserably short of Expences. The Manager was in an awkward predicament; he was the cause of raising expectations, at least innocently, that could not be answered; and stood committed to the Author and his friends in a business, which unforeseen accidents had utterly defeated. . . . An unfeeling mind might have let it rest there; but it was not an unfeeling mind that dictated the measure. Something must be done; and though the Writer of this account was at the time a very young man, Mr. Sheridan was pleased to communicate to him his difficulties on the occasion. The first idea was to write a friendly letter to the Rev. Author, and accompany it with a handsome piece of plate. To this I took the liberty to object; for, as I understood he was not a family man, it might run him to expence in showing it, which in such a case was a very natural piece of vanity, and surely in itself no way reprehensible. I rather thought something he could conveniently carry about with him would answer better; suppose a piece of Gold in the way of a Medal. Mr. Sheridan thanked me for the hint, and advising with Mr. Robert Calderwood, a silversmith of the first eminence, a man of letters also and good taste, he threw out the very same idea, influenced by pretty much the same reasons:

reasons: It was executed accordingly; the intrinsic value somewhere about twenty guineas. On one side was engraved a Laurel Wreath, and on the reverse, as nearly as I remember, at the distance of almost forty years, the following Inscription:

Thomas Sheridan, Manager of the Theatre Royal, Smock-alley, Dublin, presents this small token of his gratitude to the Author of Douglas, for his having enriched the Stage with a Perfect Tragedy.

Soon after I carried it with me to London, and through the favour of Lord Macartney, it was delivered to the Minister, Lord Bute, for his countryman the Author of Douglas. But even this also he was near being deprived of; for on the road, a few miles from London, I was stopped by highwaymen, and preserved the well-meant offering, by the sacrifice of my purse, at the imminent peril of my life. It was considered merely as a sort of compensation for the disappointment in regard of the third nights' profits, and certainly no proof of ostentation in the Manager: on what principle of decency then could Dr. Johnson treat his old Friend with that wanton insolence which he boasts he thought proper to indulge on the occasion?*

To deal ingenuously and give every man fair play, the following passage, particularly referred to, touching Johnson's animosity to Sheridan and Swift, is given from Boswell entire:

"On Friday, March 24, 1775,—Johnson was in high spirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and success. He attacked Swift, as he used to do upon all occasions. "The Tale of 'a Tub' is so much superiour to his other writings, that one can hardly believe he was the author of it. There is in it such a vigour of mind, such a swarm of thoughts, so much of nature, and art, and life."

I wondered

* Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson, vol. ii. pp. 203, 4, 5.

I wondered to hear him say of "Gulliver's Travels," "When once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do the rest." I endeavoured to make a stand for Swift, and tried to rouse those who were much more able to defend him; but in vain. Johnson at last of his own accord allowed very great merit to the inventory of articles found in the pocket of "the Man Mountain," particularly the description of his watch, which it was conjectured was his God, as he consulted it upon all occasions. He observed, that "Swift put his name to but two things, (after he had a name to put,) 'The Plan for the Improvement of the English Language,' and the last 'Drapier's Letter.'"

"From Swift, there was an easy transition to Mr. Thomas Sheridan.—JOHNSON. "Sheridan is a wonderful admirer of the tragedy of Douglas, and presented its author with a gold medal. Some years ago, at a coffee-house in Oxford, I called to him, 'Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Sheridan, how came you to give a gold medal to Home, for writing that foolish play?' This, you see, was wanton and insolent; but I *meant* to be wanton and insolent. A medal has no value but as a stamp of merit. And was Sheridan to assume to himself the right of giving that stamp? If Sheridan was magnificent enough to bestow a gold medal as an honorary reward of dramatic excellence, he should have requested one of the Universities to choose the person on whom it should be conferred. Sheridan had no right to give a stamp of merit; it was counterfeiting Apollo's coin."

In the paragraph immediately succeeding the above, if Mr. Boswell is right in his statement, the rigid stickler for truth not only encourages temporizing principles and duplicity, but, in certain cases of convenience, gives a latitude to perjury.

ADDENDA.

A D D E N D A.

(a) *Preface*, p. vii. DR. JOHNSON's Biographer is of opinion, that the most minute singularities which belonged to him should not be omitted; one anecdote of that class, perhaps as unaccountable as any which he has related, with all his assiduity, has escaped him. It was communicated to the writer of this article by Mr. Sheridan, of which he himself had shortly after an opportunity of being an eye-witness. Mr. Sheridan at the time lived in Bedford-street opposite Henrietta-street, which ranges with the south side of Covent Garden, so that the prospect lies open the whole way free of interruption; we were standing together at the drawing-room window expecting Johnson who was to dine there. Mr. Sheridan asked me could I see the length of the garden. 'No, sir!' 'Take out your Opera-glass, Johnson is coming; you may know him by his gait.' I perceived him at a good distance working along with a peculiar solemnity of deportment, and an awkward sort of measured step; at that time the broad flagging on each side the streets was not universally adopted, and stone posts were in fashion to prevent the annoyance of carriages. Upon every post as he passed along, I could observe he deliberately laid his hand; but missing one of them, when he had got at some distance; he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and immediately returning back, carefully performed the accustomed ceremony, and resumed his former course, not omitting one till he gained the crossing. This, Mr. Sheridan assured me, however odd it might appear, was his constant practice; but why or wherefore he could not inform me. . . Now for a dinner scene.

The house on the right at the bottom of Beaufort-buildings was occupied by Mr. Chamberlaine, Mrs. Sheridan's

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eldest brother, by whom Johnson was often invited in the snug way with the family party. At one of those social meetings Johnson as usual sat next the lady of the house; the dessert still continuing, and the ladies in no haste to withdraw, Mrs. Chamberlaine had moved a little back from the table, and was carelessly dangling her foot backwards and forwards as she sat, enjoying the feast of reason and the flow of soul. Johnson the while in a moment of abstraction was convulsively working his hand up and down, which the lady observing, she roguishly edged her foot within his reach, and, as might partly have been expected, Johnson clenched hold of it, and drew off her shoe; she started, and hastily exclaimed, 'O, fy! Mr. Johnson!' The company at first knew not what to make of it; but one of them, perceiving the joke, tittered. Johnson, not improbably aware of the trick, apologized: 'Nay, madam, recollect yourself; I know not that I have justly incurred your rebuke; the emotion was involuntary, and the action not intentionally rude.'

On another occasion, the Relater of these Anecdotes, who at the time resided in the house along with his good friend, Mr. Chamberlaine, was near getting himself into a hobble: Going rather abruptly into the drawing-room, he found Dr. Lucas, Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Chamberlaine with two large folios on the table before them; Johnson's Dictionary, then but lately published. One of the volumes lay open, and popping his head in among them, the first word that caught his eye was *Helter-skelter*. '... *Helter-skelter*, from *Deolſten ſceado*, the darkness of hell; hell being a place of confusion.' ... 'That's a very far-fetched etymology,' cries the youngster; the three gentlemen seemed thunder-struck, and staring at him for a moment, cast a significant glance towards the window, where stood an odd looking figure,

figure, which he had not before noticed, observing the boats passing on the Thames. 'Twas Johnson! whom indeed he did not know, and luckily for him, he seemed wholly absorbed in his own contemplations. 'Well, young fir!' says Mr. Chamberlaine, again casting an eye towards the window, 'I suppose you can give a better derivation.' 'O yes, fir!' in an instant; from the Latin; *bilariter celeriter*, merrily and swiftly: won't that do?' . . . No answer was made, but they hustled him out of the room as fast as they could; and afterwards, with some judicious animadversions on his temerity, our flippanit etymologist was made sensible how near he was getting, what perhaps he deserved, a good rap over the knuckles.

As one story often begets another, one little Anecdote more, and for the present we have done. . . . Mr. Chamberlaine, already mentioned, was a surgeon, eminent in his profession; for many a long year the Oracle of the Grecian coffee-house, and the delight of the young Templars, particularly from Ireland; for he was a humourist and dearly loved a quibble. In the year 1758, MR. WHYTE, of *Grafton-street, Dublin*, opened his Seminary for Education. Several of his friends honoured him with particular attention on the occasion, and, according to good old custom, made him presents towards house-keeping; among the rest Mr. Chamberlaine sent him a very handsome Tea-chest with an inscription on a silver plate neatly let into the lid,

"T U D O C E S,"

Thou teachest; a professional allusion, by construction in the dialect of punsters—thou tea-chest.

The Author of the *Curiosities of Literature*, printed Anno 1784, mentions a similar device, which, according to the relation, "has been lately given by the ingenious Harry Erskine, who inscribed on his Tea-chest the following words"—

"T U D O C E S."

"These,

" These, however inapplicable they may appear, when translated into our vernacular tongue run thus——

" THOU TEA-CHEST."

" The second person singular of the verb, *docere*, making a very neat pun of the substantive Tea-chest."

Cur. of Literature, London, vol. i. p. 564.

Mr. Chamberlaine has evidently the advantage of Mr. Erskine in two material points, viz. precedence as to time, and aptitude in the application: and after all, like most travelling Anecdotes, as Voltaire says of Columbus's Egg, it may have been told of others. So Wylllyām of Cloudeflé, a famous old English Archer, shot the apple off his son's head, before William Tell, the celebrated Swiss, was born. The same is recorded of one Tocho, a Goth.

' Psha!' cries the critic, ' this is absolute trifling; what in the name of common sense has all this to say to Johnson?' Why nothing, sir! it has nothing to say to Johnson: 'tis a mere bagatelle, brought in head and shoulders, one scarce can tell why; but before you censure, by way of apologue, apply it, and see if many of the stories seriously obtruded by Mr. Boswell, ay! and by greater clerks than he, don't come precisely under the same description.

(1) page 13.—*Corporal notice, as meditated against the reprobated translator of Ossian.* . . . Mr. Boswell, who can seldom be accused of nationality, on the circumstance alluded to, says—' at this time the controversy concerning the pieces published by Mr. James Macpherson, as translations of Ossian, was at its height. Johnson had all along denied their authenticity, and what was still more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The subject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, asked Dr. Johnson, whether he thought any man of modern age could

could have written such poems? Johnson replied, 'Yes, sir! many men, many women, and many children;' this is given as his serious opinion; but we are yet to learn, whether it is meant as a specimen of his venerated friend's judgment, or his inviolable regard to truth. It is certain however that Dr. Johnson plumed himself highly on his own sagacity on that occasion, as well as on the detection of the Cock-lane Ghost, which after all he did not detect;* and maintained his assertions with an asperity of language unbecoming a philosopher: we shall venture to oppose him with a different opinion; an opinion which the Doctor himself might have bowed to without disparagement, though not accompanied with so much rage. Hear what Dr. Young says in his memoir relating to those poems; addressed to the Royal Irish Academy, of which that gentleman is a distinguished member, and one of its brightest ornaments. He also made a tour to the Highlands.

"The

* Boswell in his accustomed mode of prefacing, with a pompous flourish on his illustrious friend's sagacity, vol. i. pp. 370, 1, 2, gives the tale of this famous detection as it appeared in the Public Papers, written by the Sage himself, setting forth, in substance, as follows: that he, assisted by many others of rank and character, paid a visit to a little girl, supposed to be disturbed by a spirit, and having examined the matter with a jealous attention, did ask certain questions, which the said ghost, as we may well presume, not conceiving itself obliged to answer interrogatories, did not think convenient to reply to; upon which the gentlemen, who thus examined the evidence, being satisfied of its falsity (not having uttered a single syllable) came to the following resolution, which, referring to the statement, verbatim runs thus:

"It is, therefore, the opinion of the whole assembly, that the child has some art of making or counterfeiting a particular noise, and that there is no agency of any higher cause."

He was of opinion it was a trick, and so were thousands besides; but what the particular art or contrivance of the little female Breslaw was, remains in its pristine obscurity to this day. Call you that detection?

"The great interest which has for many years been taken in the controversy concerning the authenticity of Mr. M'Pherson's *Osian*, made me desirous of collecting all the information in my power, during my excursion through the Scottish Highlands in the Summer of 1784. The following poems are part of the collection which I made at the time; and notwithstanding Mr. Hill has done so much towards bringing this warmly-contested question to a decided issue; I imagined they might throw some new additional light on the subject. I have therefore ventured to lay them before the Academy, with translations and a few explanatory notes."

"Mr. M'Pherson is by many supposed to be the sole and original Author of the Compositions which he has published as translations of the Works of *Osian*; this charge I am enabled to refute, at least in part, having fortunately met with the Originals of some of them. Mr. M'Pherson, I acknowledge, hath taken very great liberties with them; retrenching, adding and altering as he judged proper: but we must admit that he has discovered great ingenuity in these variations."

And speaking of his own translation he farther says

"Upon the whole, I believe no errors of material consequence have escaped me; but if there be such, the originals are at hand, by which they may be corrected; some of which," he tells us, "are current in Ireland, and to be seen amongst the Irish Manuscripts in the Library of the College of Dublin."

Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin 1787,

Vol. i. under the head of Antiquities, page 43 *passim*.

An Irishman, we see, has candour and honesty enough to acknowlege merit and do justice to Mr. Macpherson, while his countryman Boswell complaisantly abandons the cause,
and

and joins issue with his adversary. Dr. Johnson, whatever he might really think of Swift, would hardly call this gentleman "a very shallow fellow:" but he was a particular man, and there is no swearing what he might be tempted to.

Mr. Macpherson, it seems, having heard of some illiberal attacks on his character made behind his back by Dr. Johnson, thought fit to remonstrate by letter, which letter is however conveniently kept out of sight, so that we are left to imagine the contents; a strong foundation for doubts and surmises, where a point was to be gained. Mr. Boswell, as you are to suppose, scrupulously accurate in his account, gives us verbatim the sage's reply; the substance of which, conveyed in very apposite terms, is that he would cudgel him. Mr. Boswell's illustrious friend appears now upon the stage in a new character, and his minute Biographer is at some pains to convince his readers, that he was no less able than willing to perform it; "for having provided himself with a proper implement, I have no doubt," saith his paper champion, "but he would have made his corporal prowess be felt as much as his intellectual." To put the matter beyond controversy, as deeds speak louder than words, he corroborates his opinion by the relation of some half dozen instances; several of them ludicrous enough, of which, courteous Reader! if haply thou hast not seen the book, the following will give thee a delectable idea.

"In the Play-house at Lichfield, Johnson having quitted a chair that was placed for him behind the scenes, a gentleman took possession of it, and on Johnson's return, rudely refused to give it up; Johnson laid hold of it, and tossed him and the chair into the pit." . . . The gentleman could not, one should think, be *very rudely* disposed, who could

so

so complaisantly sit quiet, and without struggle submit to so unceremonious and awkward an exhibition. And, considering the uncouthness of the vehicle, and the distance they must have been at from the front of the stage, which the great man had to carry the audacious usurper, together with the width of the orchestra, to say nothing of the Doctor's visual incapacity and the elevation of the chevaux-de-frise between that and the pit, I think we may fairly cry, bounce! . . . There are moreover a few little items growing out of the question; as the trespass upon decency and the respect due to the audience, some of whom might have materially suffered under the pressure of such an unexpected intrusion; and, as they could not well be master of the jest, judging by appearances, they might have been prompted to espouse the quarrel of the party aggrieved, and in the way of summary justice have shown Goliath a trick worth two of it. In a neighbouring kingdom not improbably it would have passed for sheer fun; they order matters better in Britain. It was a manifest breach of the peace, and cognizable by another jurisdiction, to which the gentleman most likely would have resorted. We have a case very much in point before us. . . *Vide* the master of Auchenleck's reports, vol. ii. p. 171.—Johnson versus Macpherson. . . "Any violence offered I shall do my best to repel, and what I cannot do for myself the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian."—The plea of refusing a chair, we apprehend, would have appeared but a lame excuse, before a jury, for a fractured skull or a dislocated limb. What says Mr. Boswell? he is a lawyer; is the case altered? 'Nay, sir! Johnson; Johnson, sir! may say or do any thing.'

What

What effect Mr. Boswell's intimidating picture of Johnson produced on the mind of Macpherson we are not told; probably it never transpired; that it would have been laughed at by Sheridan numbers of his contemporaries yet living, I think, will readily believe. Records, no less authentic than Mr. Boswell's, are in being, which greatly favour the presumption; the picture they afford of him may be no unsuitable companion to hang up with that of Johnson, and though but a sketch, in the eye of a connoisseur, will hardly appear to disadvantage.

It must in the first place be honestly confessed that we have no instance on record of Sheridan's excellency at club-law; cudgel-playing was not his forte. The gentlemen of his country are wont to resort to other weapons, a custom, every thinking creature must acknowledge, more honoured in the breach than the observance, at which, however, if it were his cue to fight, Johnson would have had but little chance. The records before referred to, mention one or two notorious facts; which Mr. Boswell, as they tend to illustrate his kind friend's true character, probably never honoured with a perusal. It is there said, that when some capacious blades, the leaders of a desperate party, wantonly attacked him in his profession, stepping forward, he answered their outrage publicly from the stage, with the most becoming spirit and propriety: This so exasperated the principal ringleader, that he afterwards rushed in behind the scenes, and forced his way to his dressing-room, where he met with the chastisement his brutal arrogance richly deserved.

And now the Lawyers came in for their share of the quarrel. The Gentleman who began the affair was taken up for assaulting Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Sheridan was indicted for assaulting and beating the Gentleman. . . . Nobody at that time

I

would

would believe, that a Jury could be found in Dublin that would find a Gentleman guilty. However they were mistaken. . . . Lord Chief Justice Marlay, who presided on the bench, was the decided supporter of order and decorum. Packed juries had no business in his court; and the sheriffs, agreeable to their instructions, could impanel none but able and sufficient jurors, at their peril.

The day of trial came on. . . . Mr. Sheridan appeared as the first culprit, and was tried for assaulting and beating the Gentleman, as Mr. Kelly was constantly called in the dispute. But it appearing fully to the Jury, on the oaths of three or four men, whose honesty was unquestionable, that the Gentleman gave the Manager such abusive and provoking language in his dressing-room, as compelled him to beat him out of it, and that no other person touched him, the Jury acquitted the prisoner without going out of the box.

Then the Gentleman appeared at the bar. . . . In the course of the trial Mr. Sheridan was called upon the table, and, while he was answering the questions proposed to him, a very eminent though not a very mannerly counsellor, on the side of the prisoner, said, "he wanted to see a curiosity; I have often seen, continued he, a gentleman soldier, and a gentleman taylor, but I have never seen a gentleman player." Mr. Sheridan, without the least embarrassment, modestly bowed, and said, "Sir, I hope you see one now." A loud murmur of applause ran through the court, and the counsellor, notwithstanding his effrontery, sat down abashed, and never asked him another question. . . . In short, the JURY found the GENTLEMAN prisoner guilty, and the sentence was a *fine of five hundred pounds, and three months imprisonment.*

The

The following paragraph is added, not so much as it respects Mr. Sheridan, as for the useful lesson it conveys to those who are fond of rushing into scrapes, and shews, in the hour of difficulty, what reliance they can have on friends who are involved in a bad cause.

This Mr. Kelly, when the law-suit commenced, imagined he should be liberally supported, and hundreds subscribed to carry it on; but upon conviction he found himself wholly deserted, and after suffering some time in confinement, became so thoroughly sensible of his error, that at last he was obliged to apply to Mr. Sheridan, who instantly solicited Government to relinquish the fine of 500*l.* which was granted him, and he became solicitor and bail himself to the Court of King's Bench for the enlargement of the Gentleman.

Thus, ample redress was procured for the Manager and Actors, by obtaining that respect to be paid to the scenes of the Theatre-Royal in Dublin, which no other Theatre, till then, had the happiness to maintain: for, from that hour, not even the first man of quality in the kingdom ever asked or attempted to get behind the scenes; and before that happy æra, every person who was master of a sword, was sure to draw it on the stage door-keeper, if he denied him entrance. And thus was the long usurped tyranny of a set of wanton and dissolute gentlemen (the greatest nuisance that any city ever groaned under) effectually subdued, and the rights of the more decent and orderly part of the community recovered by the spirit and firmness of the Manager, judicially seconded by a worthy Lord Chief Justice and an honest Jury.

This is but a very brief abstract of Hitchcock's relation of the facts at large, incorporated into his work, from the
history

history of the time given by Mr. Victor, a gentleman of learning and unimpeached veracity, who was himself present, and a party concerned in the several transactions related. The trial is on record, and numbers of living witnesses can justify the Facts. Besides the present purpose, it also shews how very unlikely Sheridan was to bear unnoticed that wanton insolence, mentioned on another occasion, with which Doctor Johnson boasted he intentionally treated his old friend in a public coffee-house at Oxford. . . . See Boswell, vol. i. pp. 204, 5.

If I have been prolix on this occasion, the admirers of Mr. Boswell must allow, it was with a good example before me. It was not however to exalt a favourite at the expence of others, but simply to do justice and set an injured character in a proper point of view.

(2) page 16.—*Dr. Johnson had been tried and found wanting. . .* “He accepted of an offer to be employed as usher in the school of Market Bosworth, and after a few months he relinquished a situation which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest aversion, and even a degree of horror.” . . . [Boswell, vol. i. pp. 5, 690.] . . . “He set up a private academy at Edial, near his native city; but the only pupils that were ever put under his care were the celebrated David Garrick, his brother George, and a Mr. Offely. . . . But he was no more satisfied with his situation as Master of an Academy, than that of the Usher of a School, and did not keep it above a year and a half.” [Ibid. pp. 72, 73.] Again, “He felt the hardship of writing for bread, and was therefore willing to resume the office of a School-master.” Accordingly we find his friends soliciting for him a Master of Arts’ Degree, to qualify him for a Free School of 60l. per Ann. in Shropshire. . . . Pope recommended him to Earl Gower, who

who endeavoured to procure for him a Degree from Dublin, by a letter (which is in print) to a friend of Dean Swift, entreating him to use his interest with the Dean, "to persuade the University of Dublin to send a Diploma to him [Earl Gower] constituting this poor man Master of Arts in their University." [Ibid. pp. 107, 8, 9, 10.] . . . His disappointment in this last attempt has been imputed partly to some negligence or remissness of Swift's, on the bare supposition of which, for it no where was ever proved, Johnson could never afterwards endure him. Now on the other hand, changing situations and supposing the case Swift's, and that he had persisted in such contumelious treatment of Johnson, Mr. Boswell with perfect composure would say, "I have no feeling for such persevering resentment;" or possibly in his more splenetic moments he might have had recourse to his favourite expedient, "the lash of wit."

Neither was Sheridan wanting in Academic honours. He was Master of Arts in three of the most learned Universities of Europe, Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin; in the latter of which, his Alma-Mater, he was regularly matriculated, and obtained the distinction in due course of gradation, where the qualifications are by no means trifling, and the examinations singularly severe. . . . In the year 1758 he paid a visit in his literary capacity to Oxford, and immediately on his arrival in that renowned seat of eminent professors, he was distinguished with unusual attention; and on Tuesday November 28th, was admitted in congregation to the degree of Master of Arts. In a subsequent visit soon after to the sister University, Cambridge, he experienced the like honourable reception, and had the same degree conferred on him there also. At Edinburgh he was honoured with the Freedom of the City, which was presented to him by the hands

hands of Dr. Robertson, the celebrated professor of history, &c. This is scarcely compatible with the idea of Sheridan, which Mr. Boswell endeavours to impress upon the minds of his readers, on the authority of the irrefragable Doctor.

In the *European Magazine* for December 1788, p. 410, we are told, Mr. Sheridan's first appearance on the Stage was on the 20th of January 1743. In this statement there is a small mistake, probably an error of the press. Mr. Hitchcock, from whose Work the account is taken, p. 128, says: "On the 29th of January 1742—3, the part of Richard was attempted by a young gentleman at Smock-alley Theatre. This attempt succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations of the friends of our young candidate for fame, and equalled any first essay ever remembered by the oldest performers on the Irish Stage. Thus encouraged, our adventurer a few days after undertook the character of Mithridates in the Tragedy of that name; in which he so amply confirmed public opinion, that he threw off the disguise, and was shortly after announced to the town for a second performance of Richard, by the name of Mr. Sheridan. Like Garrick he at first shone forth a finished Actor, and at once attained the heights which many others spend years in labouring to gain. Mr. Sheridan was born in the year 1719, and early discovering signs of genius, was at a proper age sent to Westminster-school, where he remained till he was prepared to enter the University of Dublin. After going through his studies with great eclat, and taking his degrees, he quitted College. . . . The profession he embraced, involved the greatest part of his life in a perpetual round of anxious toil, and unceasing fatigue, wherein he experienced every species of ingratitude and perfidy."

The

The conductor of the periodic work, cited in the preceding paragraph, speaking of Mr. Sheridan, p. 327, says:—"About 1764 he went to France, and took up his residence at Blois by order of his Majesty, as has been asserted," and for this assertion, he quotes the correspondence of Wilkes and Horne, p. 76. The Author of the *Biographia Dramatica*, article Sheridan, also alledges the same reason, his Majesty's order, for Mr. Sheridan's retiring to France. Upon what principle his Majesty should have interfered in the business, or for what end such a notion was propagated, I am at a loss to explain. It was the persecution of his merciless creditors that drove him thither, as was stated in the application to the Irish House of Commons, not his Majesty's order; and that Mr. Sheridan could in any wise have authorized such an idle report is sufficiently refuted by his letters.

In those Memoirs of his Life, by no means ill written, it is also asserted, that "in 1776 he acted several nights at Covent Garden; after this he never performed again as an Actor." This is another proof among thousands how little is known in England of what is really going on in the sister kingdom, and affords a useful lesson, not to rely with implicit confidence on the accounts given of foreign transactions and more remote periods. Mr. Sheridan performed as an Actor in Dublin in the year 1776 and 1777. He never played as a salary performer; but from a principle of equity, relying solely upon his own powers, after he quitted the helm, and without laying the manager under any difficulties, he played always on shares, and without any tie on either side, but that of mutual advantage. The following account of what accrued singly to Mr. Sheridan from his performance, within the space of nine months, four of which the house was shut, during his

his last campaign in Dublin, corroborates our assertion, and proves to demonstration the estimation he was held in.

Theatre Royal, Crow-street,—Mr. Sheridan's dividend.

1776, June 15	Hamlet	-	-	40	1	11
20	King Lear	-	-	36	16	6
25	Cato	-	-	41	15	9
30	Richard the 3d	-	-	43	0	0
Novem. 11	King Lear	-	-	43	6	11½
18	Earl of Essex	-	-	28	7	11½
22	Double Dealer	-	-	24	7	9½
25	Cato	-	-	31	14	7
29	Richard the 3d	-	-	19	6	2½
Decem. 2	Hamlet	-	-	39	19	0
6	Double Dealer	-	-	19	2	2
9	Merchant of Venice	-	-	39	12	9
16	Provoked Husband	-	-	45	2	2
20	Merchant of Venice	-	-	24	11	0½
1777, Jan. 27	King John	-	-	48	19	4
31	Roman Father	-	-	37	12	11
February 3	King John	-	-	34	2	9½
7	Macbeth	-	-	47	14	11½
10	Cato	-	-	14	8	5½
14	Careless Husband (*)	-	-	106	15	10
24	Macbeth	-	-	38	5	8
28	King John	-	-	3	10	11½
March 5	Merchant of Venice	-	-	29	3	1½
7	Henry the 8th	-	-	7	6	3
14	Hamlet (*)	-	-	121	8	4

Total accruing to Mr. Sheridan £966 13 5

Nearly 40l. per night, upon an average, including two Benefits. (*) Adventitious circumstances in his favour there were none; novelty, that most powerful charm, was utterly out

out of the question; Mr. Sheridan was in an advanced period of life, near sixty; thirty-five years of which he had spent in the service of the Public, and of that time by far the greatest part in Dublin, his native city, where of course his appearance was familiar. The Theatre was not then in the first style of fashionable amusements; consequently in its wane, and the company by no means a strong one: add to this the acting proprietor's private distresses, and the disadvantages he laboured under as to the collateral aids of music and decorations, and it must be allowed, such signal evidence of public attention, produced by the sole attraction of an individual, is a confirmation of no common merit.

He afterwards went to the country for his health, and played the summer season in Cork, with equal advantage to his reputation, and proportionally superior in point of profit; yet the author of the *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Sheridan*, already cited, assures us he played at Covent Garden, in the year 1776, "and never after this performed again as an actor." So much for the faith of History!

The preceding account of the emolument arising to Mr. Sheridan, from his twenty-five nights of performance, was communicated to the writer by Samuel Guinness, Esq. Mr. Sheridan's confidential friend on the occasion, who received the money for him, whose return, in his own handwriting, now lies before me, from which the above is literally copied. It is also to be farther observed, in justice to Mr. Ryder, then Manager, that on account of the low state of his company, having no capital performer, particularly in the tragic line, to second him, the expence of the House, which was generally rated at sixty pound a night, was reduced, and charged only fifty pound a night to Mr. Sheridan.

The following is the advertisement of his last appearance in *Hamlet*, above mentioned, announced as usual in Faulkner's,

the Freeman's, and the Hibernian Journal, in which not one additional name appears to enhance the representation, from which a pretty adequate idea may be formed of the strength, or rather weakness, of the company.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF MR. SHERIDAN.

THEATRE-ROYAL, CROW-STREET.

THIS EVENING,
FRIDAY, MARCH THE 14TH, 1777,

WILL BE PRESENTED THE TRAGEDY OF

H A M L E T.

THE PART OF HAMLET BY MR. SHERIDAN,
BEING POSITIVELY THE LAST NIGHT OF HIS PERFORMING
THIS SEASON.

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED,

T H E C I T I Z E N.

YOUNG PHILPOT MR. RYDER.

BEFORE THE FARCE, A PRELUDE.

MARIA IN THE CITIZEN, AND THE LADY IN
THE PRELUDE, MISS BARSANTI.

After the Play Mr. Sheridan, by desire, will recite

DRYDEN'S CELEBRATED

ODE ON THE POWER OF MUSIC.

PLACES FOR THE BOXES TO BE TAKEN OF MR. CULLEN.

THE HOUSE TO BE ILLUMINATED WITH WAX.

By

By way of contrast, let us now turn our eyes, for a moment, on another period of Theatric history. The retrospect is not void of utility; it is perfectly consonant to our subject, and cannot but be interesting to the amateur.

The Theatre in Crow-street, Dublin, was erected under the auspices of Spranger Barry, Esq. in opposition to Sheridan. Monday the 23d of October 1758, the house opened with the *Kind Impostor*, a Comedy by Cibber, under the conduct of Messrs. Barry and Woodward, joint Managers; and Mr. Sheridan, who was then in England, from some heavy losses and disappointments he had sustained, declining to come over, Smock-alley was in no condition to make head against them, so that success and fortune seemed wholly at their devotion. They had the advantage of novelty in all points; a new and splendid Theatre; a rich and capital wardrobe, a select and well-appointed company, an excellent band, their own personal consequence, youth, beauty, and every imaginable attraction in their favour. Mr. Barry, one of the finest and most interesting figures in nature, at the acme of his profession in the Tragic walk, was scarcely turned of forty, and Woodward, with his coffers full of guineas, a no less distinguished favourite in the Comic scene, in the meridian of life. Mrs. Dancer [the celebrated Mrs. Crawford] rapidly rising into fame; Mrs. Fitzhenry in her zenith; Mrs. Jefferson, and a long *et cetera* of accomplished heroines, one should think, of themselves sufficient to ensure their triumph; accordingly the close of the season saw the new Managers in unrivalled possession, exulting in the plenitude of Theatric power. But it is the succeeding season we have now more immediately in view. In the opinion of the most discerning moral and political writers, the dearest interests of society are influenced by the state of public amusements,

amusements, and the flourishing condition of a Theatre is considered as one of the strongest proofs of the civilization and prosperity of a people. The season referred to, commencing with the Winter of the year 1759, and ending in 1760, is described as one of the most brilliant and successful ever known with Ireland, and for that reason, the most worthy of notice; besides, the Author, having by a singular accident obtained the only authentic document on the subject, has it in his power, not only to ascertain to a shilling the gross amount of the money received that memorable season, but farther to gratify curiosity with a specification of the particular receipts of fourteen of their most splendid exhibitions.

The Managers having successfully completed their recruiting business in England, and along with other capital acquisitions, having added Mr. Mossop to their forces, who was then, as Davies says, esteemed in London the sheet-anchor of Tragedy; and the reigning favourite next to Garrick, they returned with expectations as sanguine and as flattering as the warmest fancy could suggest. That those expectations were founded on reason and probability, will be seen by a slight review of their recommendations. Their company, as Hitchcock not unwarrantably describes it, was, perhaps, the strongest, and best formed, of any hitherto beheld in Ireland. High in public favour, their credit established, a new Theatre, an excellent wardrobe; they had every advantage which could be derived from a combination of circumstances so fortunate. To crown these, and give animation to the whole, they were in a very eminent degree possessed of every influence which the court could give. Robert Wood, Esq. then Master of the Revels, in this kingdom, appointed Mr. Barry and Mr. Woodward, his deputies, by which Crow-street became the Theatre-Royal. He also conferred upon them the office of directors of his Majesty's
Band;

Band; a post indeed of more honour than profit. The Duke of Dorset then Lord Lieutenant, who was remarkably popular, and the Dukes, were peculiarly fond of the Theatre, and honoured it with their presence generally once or twice a week during the season.

Thus powerfully prepared, they took the field, and the house opened Wednesday, October 3d, 1759. Every thing seemed to wear a propitious aspect at the New Theatre-Royal, Crow-street; neither pains nor expence was spared in preparing the pieces for representation. The Tragedies were got up in a style of superior splendour. The expence of the mere guards in *Coriolanus* amounted to £3. 10. per night. The guards and chorus singers in *Alexander* to 8l. The acting of the Tragedies was first rate. The force of the two heroes of the buskin, (and never were two tragedians of such uncommon excellence whose abilities better accorded) was aided by the powerful attractions of Mrs. Dancer and Mrs. Fitzhenry. A specimen or two will shew the strength of their representations: as, *Othello*, Mr. Barry; *Roderigo*, Mr. Woodward; *Cassio*, Mr. Dexter; *Brabantio*, Mr. Walker; *Iago*, Mr. Mossop; *Desdemona*, Mrs. Dancer; and *Emilia*, Mrs. Fitzhenry. *Venice Preserved*: *Pierre*, Mr. Mossop; *Jaffier*, Mr. Barry; *Belvidera*, Mrs. Dancer. In *Jane Shore*: *Hastings*, Barry; *Dumont*, Mossop; *Jane Shore*, Mrs. Dancer; *Alicia*, Mrs. Fitzhenry. *All for Love*: *Anthony*, Barry; *Dolabella*, Dexter; *Ventidius*, Mossop; *Octavia*, Mrs. Dancer; *Cleopatra*, Mrs. Fitzhenry. These, with Mr. Woodward's excellent Pantomines, brought out in the highest perfection, were deserving every encouragement. Almost every night produced some novelty; and sometime before the close of the season, Mrs. Abington, that elegant and fashionable Actress, as Boswell justly styles her in his life of Johnson, joined the standards of Crow-street.

Mr.

Mr. William Barry, the Manager's brother, was Treasurer to the Theatre; his receipt-book is now in my possession, from which the following account of the receipts of the season of 1759, 60, is extracted; from a view of which, compared with what Sheridan alone drew in the last year of his performance, it must be necessarily admitted, that the accounts given of his theatrical consequence, however depreciated by Johnson and Boswell, are not exaggerated.

1760, June 4th, Produce of 163 plays acted

this season, per Treasurer's Book	£ 11621	13	6½
From Government for three plays	-	90	0 0
Ditto one play	-	22	15 0
Total amount, Governmt. plays included,	£ 11734	8	6½

Receipts of the last 14 Plays, viz.

May 7, Barbarossa, Mossop's Benefit	133	11	6
9, Winter's Tale - -	109	19	2
10, Julius Cæsar - -	94	10	5
12, Winter's Tale - -	40	17	11
14, Julius Cæsar, 2d night -	30	15	4
16, Conscious Lovers, F. Mafons' Nt.	149	0	3
17, Recruiting Officer, Command	57	18	1
19, <i>Double Dealer</i> - -	12	15	8
22, <i>Provoked Husband</i> , Mrs. Abington	129	4	10
23, Othello - -	59	7	4
28, <i>Richard the Third</i> - -	29	12	7
29, <i>Earl of Essex</i> - -	65	3	3½
30, The Revenge - -	45	7	10
June 4, Committee, Government Play	4	6	8
For ditto, from Government	22	15	0
Total produce of 14 plays -	£ 985	5	10½
Advantage on the side of Sheridan	683	19	1½

Amount of Sheridan's 14 nights, per contra £ 1669 5 0
Receipts

A D D E N D A.

71

Receipts of 25 plays in which Mr. Sheridan was concerned the last year of his performance in Dublin, taken from the books of the theatre, under the management of Ryder.

1776, June 15, Hamlet	-	130	3	10
20, King Lear		123	13	0
25, Cato	-	133	11	6
30, <i>Richard the Third</i>		136	0	0
Nov. 11, King Lear		136	13	11
18, <i>Earl of Essex</i>		106	15	11
22, <i>Double Dealer</i>		98	15	7
25, Cato	-	113	9	2
29, <i>Richard the Third</i>		88	12	5
Dec. 2, Hamlet	-	129	18	0
6, <i>Double Dealer</i>		88	4	4
Produce of 11 plays		-	£ 1285	17 8
9, Merch. of Venice		129	5	6
16, <i>Provoked Husband</i>		140	4	4
20, Merch. of Venice		99	2	1
1777, Jan. 27, King John	-	147	18	8
31, Roman Father		125	5	10
Feb. 3, King John		118	5	7
7, Macbeth		145	9	11
10, Cato	-	78	16	11
14, Careless H. Benefit		156	15	10
24, Macbeth		126	11	4
28, King John		57	1	11
March 5, Merch. of Venice		108	6	3
7, Henry the Eighth		64	12	6
14, Hamlet, Benefit		171	8	4
Amount of 14 plays		-	£ 1669	5 0
Total amount of Sheridan's 25 nights			£ 2955	2 8
			Thus	

Thus Mr. Sheridan, even in life's decline, and the no less declining state of the Drama, unsupported as he was, in fourteen nights drew 683l. 19s. 1d. or 48l. 10s. per night, more than in the same number of nights was produced by the united powers of Crow-street, in one of the most brilliant seasons, according to theatric annals, ever known in Ireland. Should it be said that the receipts of Mr. Sheridan's nights are enhanced by two benefits, it must be also observed that the other party had three, and those Mr. Mossop's, Mrs. Abington's, and the Freemasons', with the superaddition of a Command, to counter-balance them. Mr. Sheridan, on an average, acted to houses of upwards of 118l. per night, by which he put about twenty-six guineas per night into his own purse, exclusive of his benefits. The New Crow-street Luminaries, one night with another, computing on the whole, did not bring quite seventy-two pounds per night, which, rating any one of them on the same scale with Sheridan, or all of them successively, at half the profits after fifty pound, with all their exertions and every other fortunate circumstance combined, would not produce ten guineas per night to the individual.

Mr. Sheridan, however, who had incurred an enormous load of debt in his endeavours to reform and establish the Dublin Theatre, was ruined in the first stage of the opposition, and his opponents did not long enjoy their triumph. After four years constant anxiety, fatigue and trouble, in the year 1762, Mr. Woodward returned to his native country with the loss of the greatest part of his fortune, obliged to begin the world again.* Barry held out a little longer; but

in

* The summer season ensuing Woodward came again to Dublin, and, in hopes of picking up a few guineas, joined the corps of Smock-alley; but though his first appearance was announced for a Public Charity, the good people of Dublin, offended at some unguarded expressions in his Prologue on his appearance in Drury-lane the winter before, would not suffer him to go on with his part. This at once put an end to his expectations in that country, from which he immediately departed, never more to return.

In his avarice of conquest he had brought over a rod to whip himself, which, the season after, took root, and for a time held up its head and flourished in Smock-alley; the two houses were again embroiled in competition, and violent were the contentions betwixt the Capulets and the Montagues.

At length, the superiour genius of Mossop prevailed. After seven years contest, Mr. Barry was obliged to resign the field to his then seemingly more fortunate rival; having, during that time, experienced more chagrin, vexation, and disappointment than imagination can well conceive. Harassed in mind and body, he had lavished so many years of the prime of his life, and instead, of reaping the fruits of such shining abilities as Nature had blessed him with, had incurred debts he could never discharge, ruined many persons connected with him, and involved himself in difficulties, which, during the remainder of his life, he could never surmount.

His, I cannot call him more successful, competitor, was not in a much more enviable situation. His finances were also greatly deranged, his credit impaired, and his resources nearly exhausted. After a few years fruitless struggle, his spirits sunk under the pressure of accumulated misfortunes; and a severe illness prevented his appearing on the stage. In this distressed situation, he was obliged to solicit the generosity of the Public he had so often delighted, and a play was announced for his Benefit, in which he was not able to perform. The Benefit was fixed for the 17th of April, 1771, which, though the house was crowded, afforded him but a temporary relief. His affairs were so desperate, it was next to an impossibility for any efforts to retrieve them, and in despair he relinquished Crow-street to his rivals. He was soon after arrested in London, and committed to the King's Bench; where, in spite of all the efforts of his friends, he was condemned to endure a long and severe confinement, and though he was at last liberated, various and insurmount-

able difficulties prevented his ever again displaying to the Public those abilities that merited a better fate. Mossop, in company with Edward Smith, of Jubilee, Esq. his countryman and fellow collegian, after that made the tour of Europe; but neither change of climate, nor the consolations of friendship, could *minister to a mind diseased, or pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow*. November 1773, in great poverty, at a miserable lodging in Chelsea, he died of a broken heart.

The stories of Victor, and Sowdon, and Brown, and Dawson, and Ryder,* successively exhibit but a repetition of similar

* Mr. RYDER's father's name was *Preswick Ryder*, an Irishman, and for some time a considerable Printer and Bookseller in Dublin. He was obliged to abscond on his printing an inflammatory pamphlet against Government, a Proclamation having been issued, and a Reward of One Thousand Pounds offered, for apprehending him. He took on him the name of *Darby* (his wife's name) and for many years was an itinerant Comedian in England, where RYDER and his brother *Samuel* were born. RYDER played at Edinburgh and several towns in England by that name; but resumed his real one some time before he came to this kingdom. The first and second years of his management in Dublin, he met with great success, and received vast sums of money, exclusive of 3000*l*. he got in the Exchange Scheme, a Lottery grafted on a Dutch one. Notwithstanding which, though no person ever could charge him with being an extravagant man, he, by the Vicissitude of Time, and a Falling-off of Theatrical business, became bankrupt, and afterwards quit this for some years, and played in London, Edinburgh, &c. On his return to Dublin in 1791, he was in such a state of health, as required him to be in the country. The means were wanting. To support a wife and four children also required the assistance of Friends. One of whom (the Printer of this Work) happy in an opportunity of any way contributing to the relief of an old and worthy Friend, had him removed to his house in *Sandymount*, near Dublin, where he was comfortably supported, and respectful attention paid to him by himself and his family; and at times, when every exertion has been made, and every nerve strained, to rouse him from despondence, and divert the sense of affliction that preyed upon his mind, and under which he lamentably sunk, he would sigh heavily, and say, "Oh, MARCHBANK! they have broke my heart." On Saturday, November 27, 1791, he was released from his troubles, and on the Wednesday following he was buried in *Drumcondra Church-yard*, attended by many of his Friends, whose regard, alas! died with him;—no Monument or Grave-stone tells where his remains lie.

similar scenes of embarrassment and distress; who, in their turn, sunk under the weight of calamity, and finished, like Moslop, a miserable existence in obscurity and want. . . .

Here is room for meditation. Fond, unthinking youth! be advised: trust not the fallacious allurements of the stage; it is a wilderness of thorns and quicksands, which affords no reasonable hopes of escaping; for, though a few who were native there, and to the manner born, may seem exceptions, it is indeed a comfortless situation for adventurers of a different class. The men whose catastrophe you have just perused, were most of them born to better prospects, richly endowed by nature, of extraordinary talents, highly improved by education, and had attained to the summit of the profession; yet disappointment and misery were their portion.

Upon the whole, in respect to the subject of our present enquiry, two inferences may be deduced:

1st. If Mr. Sheridan could have reconciled it to his principles of honour, and his prudence (bought by woeful experience) to run the risk of involving himself, and the fortunes of his friends, in the contest; with his abilities, aided by the strong support of an excellent private character, he might possibly have postponed the evil day, and turned the tables on his adversaries.

2d. The attempts of Dr. Johnson to depreciate the talents and abilities of his good old friend, as handed down to posterity by Boswell, were unsupported by facts, and neither do honour to his judgment or his heart.

† p. 374. *Faulkner, whom he looked on, &c.* } The Writer of
 || p. 384, *The paragraph told prettily, &c.* } the Memoirs of
 Mr. Sheridan's Life, given in the European Magazine,
 Anno 1788, informs his readers, that "The following Anecdote appeared in the English News-papers about the year
 1768."

1768," and adds, " we give it on that authority, and in the very words, without vouching for the truth of it, though we believe it may be depended upon :—Last year Mr. Sheridan, the actor, obtained an Irish Act of Parliament, protecting him from arrests on account of his debts in Dublin, amounting to sixteen hundred pounds; and having this season saved eight hundred pounds, he gave notice that he was ready to pay his creditors ten shillings in the pound, and desired them to call on him for that purpose, with an account of their respective demands. Mr. Faulkner, the printer of one of the Dublin papers, was one of his creditors. This gentleman told Mr. Sheridan, that he would not trouble him with his demand till he dined with him: Mr. Sheridan accordingly called at Mr. Faulkner's; and after dinner Mr. Faulkner put a sealed paper into his hand, which he told him contained his demand, at the same time requesting Mr. Sheridan to examine it at his leisure at home: when he came home he found, under seal, a bond of his for two hundred pounds, due to Mr. Faulkner, cancelled, together with a receipt in full of a book debt, to the extent of one hundred pounds.—Whether is the conduct of the actor or printer the more generous and laudable?

This paragraph contains a jumble of circumstances ill understood, garnished with others that had no existence but in the writer's imagination. . . . At the close of the season, in May 1758, Mr. Sheridan went to London, to collect forces for the next Winter's campaign; but in the event of some adverse occurrences, finding himself unable for the present to stem the tide of opposition, disgusted with the ill-treatment of his fellow citizens, and weary of a profession he never cordially relished, he relinquished the management of Smock-alley, and remained in England for the five succeeding years. During that interval he supported himself and family, whom at no time he neglected, in a style of genteel independence,

independence,* chiefly by his literary exertions, and remitted to Mr. Sheen, his brother-in-law, in Dublin, about five hundred pounds, which was divided among such of his creditors as applied in consequence of an advertisement in the public papers several times repeated. In 1763, the Earl, afterwards Duke, of Northumberland, was appointed to the Government of Ireland. This, Mr. Sheridan, having the honour of being known to his Excellency, and still panting for his native home, considered as an auspicious event, and accordingly prepared for his return; on Saturday November the 5th, he arrived in Dublin, having first obtained a Letter of Licence from the majority of his creditors, in which it was stipulated, he should pay into Trustees' hands for their use, one half of whatever he should acquire, by acting or otherwise, during his stay there, with limitation for two years. Barty invited him to his house as his guest, where for a short time he took up his quarters, and, pursuant to agreement, the Friday following, November 11th, played Hamlet to 185l. 4s. 4d. which, sharing half the profits after 60l. as settled for each night of his performance, brought him 62l. 17s. 2d. for the first night. On the like conditions he

* "If this account should startle the belief of those who hunt after employments as their only resource, Mr. Sheridan begs leave to remind them that it was not his case; he had it in his power to provide for himself much better than the Government could. He had set out in life upon certain principles, early imbibed from his great master Swift, which would not suffer him to think of such a course. Among these, one of the foremost was independence; without which there could be no liberty. By independence he means only a reliance upon a man's self, and his own talents and labours, for his support and advancement in life; for absolute independence belongs not to human beings." . . . "Though they who know not the value of such sort of independence; though they who know not how sweet the bread is which is earned by the sweat of one's own brow, may not have any faith in principles of this sort, yet surely they will give credit to a man upon their own favourite maxim, that of self-interest."

Sheridan's Humble Appeal to the Public, 8vo. 1758, p. 34.

he continued performing till March, in all twenty-four nights, besides benefits, and cleared upon the whole 863l. 1s. 10d.

The following is the list of plays, with Mr. Sheridan's dividend on each, respectively annexed.

Theatre Royal, Crow-Street.

1763, Nov.	11, Hamlet	-	62	17	2
	12, Ditto	-	50	9	11
	17, Richard the Third		24	6	4½
	19, Ditto	-	24	0	11½
	21, Venice Preserved		19	13	1½
	26, Jane Shore	-	31	16	5½
	28, Venice Preserved		7	17	7
Dec.	8, All for Love	-	11	12	10½
	10, Julius Cæsar	-	39	16	9
	12, Hamlet	-	94	10	4
	15, Othello	-	27	16	9½
1764, Jan.	9, Cato	-	29	3	4
	12, Hamlet	-	12	9	8
	14, Provoked Wife		0	14	10
	16, Richard the Third		12	15	7½
	21, Macbeth	-	6	2	11
	23, Comus	-	13	15	8
	28, Ditto	-	14	2	2
Feb.	4, As you like it		3	16	10½
	15, Othello	-	19	15	11
	11, All for Love	-	22	4	8
	13, King John	-	6	18	7½
	16, Alexander	-	18	5	0½
	20, Julius Cæsar	-	4	10	5
To Mr. Sheridan for 24 nights			£	559	14 1
Additional shares and benefits			-	303	7 9
Total			-	£	863 1 10

This,

This, in his way of proceeding, was more to the immediate advantage of his creditors than his own; for though, on the exprefs condition of the letter of licence, he was obliged to hand over one half merely, 431l. 10s. 11d. for their use, by this exertion of his talents alone, they received 668l. 3s. od. reserving to his separate disposal only 219l. 18s. 10d. The particulars of which appear in the following account, stated by Mr. Knowles, his brother-in-law and agent, which, with the original vouchers, on a former occasion deposited with my Father, are all now lying on my desk.

Total receipt of Mr. Sheridan's shares and benefits, from Nov. 1763, to April 1764, inclusive £ 863 1 10
Cash paid to and for the use of Mr. Sheridan's creditors, viz.

Nov. 17, To J. Watfon, as per receipt	120	0	0
Dec. 14, To Mat. Williamson, do.	30	0	0
19, To Richard Cullen, do.	11	7	6
30, To H. Mitchell, Esq. do.	50	0	0
To Tho. Adderly, Esq. do.	50	5	2
1764. To fundry small debts	21	10	4
Mar. 22, To W. Lefanu, Esq. trustee for the creditors, at sundries, as per his receipts	360	0	0
		643	3 0
To Anth. Grayson, Esq's. attorney, advanced by Mr. Whyte	25	0	0
	£ 668	3	0
Balance remaining in Mr. Sheridan's hands	£ 219	18	10
Remitted to Mrs. Sheridan, per Mr. Benson's draft on Messrs. Portis, London, for the use of his family, 100l. English		107	17 6
Balance reserved for his own use	-	£ 112	1 4
May the 4th, 1764,	JOHN KNOWLES.		

Out

Out of this slender pittance he had to pay his lodgings, support himself and his servant, and, on many occasions, to provide dresses and other articles proper for his appearance on the stage; the Theatrical wardrobe at that time being in a reduced state, and rather scantily suited. This at once refutes the idle notion of his extravagance, industriously propagated by his calumniators, and confidently asserted by many at this day. . . . Several who had demands against him, as before intimated, refused to sign the letter of licence, and as the artful and designing are never wanting in specious pretexts, he trusted to their honour; but they lay perdue watching their opportunity, and the event proved the wisdom of precaution on the part of Mr. Sheridan. While he continued playing, and was daily feeding his gaping creditors with gold, they suffered him to go on unmolested; but, notwithstanding these unequivocal proofs of his integrity, immediately on the expiration of his agreement with Barry, which closed with a benefit, his quondam Printer, who held a bond of his, and had but lately received a very handsome partial payment, entered judgment; and without further respite, ordered execution. My Father, fortunately, had the Sheriff's son then under his tuition, and through that channel got a hint of the business, which, having previously secured a passage in a vessel for England, he imparted to Mr. Sheridan, and hurried him directly on board. He landed safely at Parkgate, on the last day of April 1764, and by this means, the humane design of arresting him was frustrated.

According to the schedule, communicated to my Father by Mr. Knowles, together with other papers occasionally cited, his debts amounted to 5687l. 18s. 7d. exclusive of the mortgage on Quilca, and some others which he could not accurately ascertain, making in all upwards of 7000l. besides interest,

interest, contracted, not by extravagance and dissipation, but, with corroding anxiety and incessant fatigue, in the service of an ungrateful Public. The Irish Stage, before he, fatally for himself, engaged in the management, was a mere Bear-garden; by his unwearied exertions and abilities, it was raised to a degree of respectability and consequence, that would have done honour to the most enlightened and polished ages.* After maintaining his fruitless struggles through a long series of years, at last encountering those baleful hydras, Fashion and Caprice, his flattering hopes and all his shining prospects were defeated. In 1759, with a growing family, for whose welfare he was ever ardently solicitous; with an impaired constitution and bankrupt in his fortune, he retired from the scene; and, as the Historian honourably testifies, "the last day of his management was, in every respect, as laudable and praise-worthy as the first."

M

I have

* "The Stage indeed had long been in a declining condition. Salaries were badly paid; business totally neglected, while irregularity and indecorum pervaded the whole. . . . The appearance and success of a new Actor produced sometime after the most remarkable change ever known in the Theatrical affairs of Ireland. . . . We must not however imagine that all this was accomplished in a day. It was the work of years.—Perfection is only to be attained by perseverance. . . . It may be naturally supposed that at first he had many difficulties to encounter. Bad habits, confirmed by time, were hard to be eradicated. Performers were unused to regularity and the taste of the town was pallid and vitiated. Non-payment of salaries he knew was the radical source of disorders; this, at the first setting off, and through the whole course of his management, he effectually obviated; and in other respects his methods were so gentle, and at the same time so salutary, that they carried conviction with them. He always attended rehearsals, and settled the business of each scene with precision; not the most trifling incident preparatory to the performance was omitted. . . . His great judgment and perfect knowledge of his situation, amply qualified him for an instructor; and his regulations were so proper and conveyed in so pleasing a manner, that they were irresistible, and could not fail to be complied with. His highest ambition seemed to center in being considered the father of his company."

EXTRACT FROM HITCHCOCK.

I have been the more particular in tracing the foregoing transactions, and quoting the original vouchers now before me, as it was on the ground of these facts the Petition to Parliament was framed on Mr. Sheridan's behalf, by which he became entitled to the benefit of an Act of Insolvency, passed in the year 1766, while he was absent with his family at Blois in France. To do justice, it must be also confessed, that the sum of 360*l.* as above specified, paid into the hands of the Trustee for the Creditors, had not, when the application to Parliament was attempted, been distributed; owing to some difficulties in the business, which without Mr. Sheridan could not satisfactorily be adjusted. However, upon the whole, the Creditors had no great reason to complain; Mr. Lefanu did not suffer the money to lie dormant, nor, as a Banker he might, apply it to his own profit. He laid it out in Debentures, and liquidating the interest with the principal, when the matters in dispute were settled, honourably handed over to every man his share, which was more than could well be expected, and so far a reasonable compensation for the delay; but in regard to the parliamentary business, it was a circumstance, in the first stage, of untowardly aspect, and if not cautiously guarded against, might have defeated the attempt. This the Petitioner was aware of, and therefore, not to incur a greater risk, till the last moment concealed his design. That point being unexpectedly obtained, as our readers have before seen, Mr. Sheridan quitted France, where he had been deserted by all his wealthy and protesting friends,* whom his warm prosperity had graced; and was once more happily restored to his native land. He arrived in Dublin the latter end of October 1766, and on Monday, February 2*d* following, appeared at Crow-street in Hamlet,

* See his Letter, dated Blois, August 1*st*, 1766, in a preceding page annexed to the Remarks on Boswell.

Hamlet, and continued performing there for fourteen nights, with his usual eclat, ending with Maskwell in the Double Dealer, for his own benefit. That day, after dinner, he consulted my Father, on the subject of calling a meeting of his Creditors, a point he had had sometime in contemplation. My Father warmly opposed it; conceiving it likely to involve him in fresh embarrassments, by exciting expectations which could not be gratified, and by implicated promises again endanger his personal safety, notwithstanding the measures recently adopted; upon the whole, as favouring more of ostentation, to which my Father was in all cases particularly averse, than any Good it could possibly produce. Perhaps his sincere wishes for the real honour of Mr. Sheridan, co-inciding with a disposition naturally zealous, made him over earnest in his remonstrances; some friends present not seeing, or in compliment to Mr. Sheridan, not choosing to see the affair in the light my Father took it, over-ruled the arguments he offered, and confirmed Mr. Sheridan in his purpose; however, he acknowledged the propriety of being guarded; and on Tuesday, March the 24th, 1767, the following advertisement appeared in Faulkner's Journal.

"Mr. Sheridan desires to meet his Creditors at the Music-Hall, in Fishamble-street, on Thursday the 2d of April, at One o'Clock, in order to concert with them the most speedy and effectual method for disposing of his effects and making a dividend."

The result of this meeting has been already set forth in the course of the Remarks, page 376. My Father attended, as Mr. Sheridan made it a point; but purposely delayed till the business of the congress was nearly settled, that he might not be called on for his opinion. Soon after his entrance, Mr. Sheridan, who was on the look-out, accosted him, 'Sam! I am glad to see you are come;' . . . my Father bowed. . . . 'I perceive you are not satisfied with the measure.' . . . 'Indeed,

Sir,

Sir, I am not." . . . Mr. Sheridan paused, and perhaps on reflection, when too late, was convinced he had taken a precipitate step. A coolness succeeded between the two friends; this was fomented by the officiousness of others, which occasioned a disunion of some continuance; but not the smallest appearance of animosity or recrimination occurred on either side; their spirit was above it; on the contrary, many acts of kindness and mutual good offices took place in the interval, which shewed a wish for the restoration of amity on both sides, if any one about them had been honest enough to promote it. My Father, still bearing in mind the obligations he owed to Mrs. Sheridan, who was the friend and parent of his youth, continued, without abatement, his attachment to her children; they, on a proper occasion, interposed; the parties were brought together, and their difference no more was remembered. It is to this difference between Mr. Sheridan and him, my Father alludes in his *Elegy on the Instability of Affection*, which stands the third in order in the New Edition of his Poems.

One Friend, one chosen Friend, I once possess'd,
And did I in the hour of trial fail?
Still be his Virtues, his Deserts confess'd;
But o'er his lapses, Memory, drop the Veil.

WHYTE'S POEMS, p. 119.

The last office of kindness he had it in his power to render him, was at his lodgings in Frith-street, Soho. He supported him from his apartment down stairs, and helped him into the carriage that took him to Margate, where, the ninth day after, Death obliterated every thing—but his Virtues.

An observation or two more and we have done. . . . While Barry was struggling against the storm, which at last overwhelmed him, he gained, as already noted, Mr. Sheridan to his cause. The receipts of his first four houses are stated by

by Hitchcock,* by which the reader will be farther enabled to judge of the truth of the paragraph in question; premising, on the same authority, that at this period the business in general was very bad, the rage being entirely for sing-song and Smock-alley. Love in a Village at Crow-street, five times repeated, never reached 30*l.* sometimes not 14*l.* other receipts have descended so low as 10*l.* Mr. Sheridan's first four nights as follows, viz.

1767, Feb. 2, Hamlet	-	-	171	19	0
5, Richard	-	-	113	15	0
9, Cato	-	-	141	16	0
13, Hamlet	-	-	148	9	5

Total receipt of Sheridan's four nights £ 575 19 5

The

* This writer, though remarkably exact in what came within the compass of his research, has been led into an error respecting Mr. Sheridan. He has adopted a notion, generally entertained, that Sheridan had the honour of being Preceptor to the Queen. Mr. Sheridan always contradicted it, and declared to the contrary. One day speaking on the subject, he said, "Our countrymen are fond of engrossing imaginary distinctions; it is a trait in the national character. Some years ago, the sign of Thamas Kouli Khan, Sophi of Persia, stared you in the face in every corner of Dublin, and all mouths were filled with the History and wonderful Exploits of that fortunate Usurper, who, incredible as it may seem, was discovered to be nothing more or less, than an Irish Renegade, honest Tom Callaghan of the county of Cork, who, according to the creed of the day, by his uncommon feats of valour and address, had raised himself to that dignity." . . . Angria, another distinguished Freebooter of the East, in like manner, was notoriously a native of the Island of Saints; nay, I have known some who have a hundred times played marbles with him; 'a damned keen dog he always was, and the foremost in every mischief.' On a recent occasion, in a very respectable company, it was very seriously asked, if Hyder Ali was not an Irishman. In a similar strain it was but lately asserted, that Dumourier, the French General's real name was Murray, formerly a private in the Irish Brigades. The O'Reillys, every child knows, are lineally descended from the Aurelii, a noble and imperial family of Ancient Rome.

The other ten, including two Benefits, were in order—The Double Dealer, Ditto second Night, Hamlet, The Double Dealer, Jane Shore, Double Dealer, Venice Preserved, King John, Julius Cæsar, and on Friday March 20th, The Double Dealer, for his last Benefit. The particular receipts are not preserved; but, as his novelty must have somewhat abated, we cannot presume with altogether equal success. Set down the entire upon an average at 130*l.* per night, by which with the addition of two Benefits, it may be admitted that he cleared 650*l.*; no part of which, either by compact or implication, his Creditors had any claim to. He had his own necessities to provide for, and a young family with none but himself to look up to; their most excellent mother was no more; and the state of his finances put it out of his power to indulge in works of supererogation.*

The hearse his wife's respected corse that bore
Left him posses'd of scarce one louis-d'or.

WHYTE'S POEMS, p. 224

No calculation can be made to support the story from the succeeding occurrences. Mr. Barry, notwithstanding the extraordinary assistance he had derived from his union with Sheridan, soon after found himself obliged to resign to his then more fortunate antagonist; but mindful of his late obligations to the man, whom his rash opposition had formerly set adrift, in settling with Mossop, he provided in the body of the Article for Sheridan's being engaged, which was certainly with a friendly and good intention on the part of Barry. Sheridan took it otherwise, and was so offended that any man should presume to carve for him, that he would accede to no offers, and did not appear that winter. In the month of April following, Sheridan and Mossop accidentally meeting at
an

* See his Letter as before, dated Blois, August 1st, and also that of October 13th, 1766.

† *Mirror for Youth* addic'd to the *Theatro-Mania*, line 552.

an entertainment given by a mutual friend, former bickerings were speedily forgotten, and, resentment giving place to convenience, the parties came to an agreement. Sheridan appeared a few days after in Hamlet, Richard and Cato successively; but Mossop declining a proposal to unite their powers and appear together, the connection was dissolved; and Sheridan, without taking a benefit, went off to England, to meet his young family on their return from France.

The amount of Mr. Sheridan's debts, as set forth in the paragraph under consideration, widely differs from the return given in by Mr. Knowles, who, being some time treasurer to the Theatre and Mr. Sheridan's agent, as well as married to his sister, must have thoroughly known the situation of his affairs. The schedule was made out for my Father, supposing he might have occasion for it, on his examination before the Committee of the House of Commons, touching the particulars; a case which required circumspection.

By this time our Readers must have perceived, from the very nature of the circumstances, the authority of the paragraph was too hastily admitted, and the flourish on liberality grounded on misrepresentation. If the Alderman had really acted in the manner described, it would have been no compliment to Sheridan; the compliment would have been to the Creditors, whose distributive shares would have been thereby proportionally augmented, as the Alderman's quota, so relinquished, must have merged in the general fund. Consequently, without detracting from the merits of Mr. Faulkner, and great merits he certainly possessed, on his part the eulogium was undeserved, and we risk nothing in asserting, that on the other it was equally undesired. Sheridan had a consciousness of integrity and rectitude within, that supported

supported him in every emergency through life; no praise was of any value in his estimation but what was honestly obtained. He realized in his conduct, to the fullest extent, the sentiment contained in those beautiful lines of Pope, which I have heard him, more than once, in his impressive manner, with pointed and peculiar energy recite:

All fame is foreign, but of true desert;
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;
And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

ESSAY ON MAN, Ep. iv. l. 254.

JUNE 12TH, 1798.



THE

ORIGINAL LETTERS,

ᄒc. ᄒc.

THE subsequent LETTERS, selected from a long course of epistolary correspondence between Mr. and Mrs. SHERIDAN and my FATHER, establish the Facts, in contradiction to Mr. Boswell and others, set forth in our REMARKS on that Writer's voluminous MEMOIRS of the LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON, for which purpose the printing of them was chiefly intended. But, though few in number, they have recommendations which render them intrinsically valuable. They have the merit of being genuine, and written immediately to the occasion, without the least view to publication, which confessedly was not the case with most of the productions of our first-rate geniuses in this way. Their compositions, under the name of Familiar Letters, however admirable in other respects, are rather Epistolary Essays, like the papers of the Spectators, the result of premeditation and care; scrupulously corrected and polished for the press.* Here we have examples of familiar writing as it should be, in its native simplicity and ease; every thought in its original

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conception

* We are told that a certain author of great learning and talents, used to employ a month in writing a letter of moderate length; and Pliny apologizes for the unusual length of a letter, by saying, he had not time to make it shorter, which is a proof that he was not accustomed to set down his thoughts *currente calamo*, or without reserve, to commit to his friends and posterity, the genuine effusions of his heart. Collections of Familiar Letters, are indeed numerous, by far the greatest part made in the life time and printed under the inspection of the authors. Mr. Addison has been known to suspend business of high importance, and stop the press to alter a comma or revise a word.

conception as it arose in the mind, spontaneously flowing from the pen. Truth is not sacrificed to ornament, nor sincerity disguised in studied periods. Several literary anecdotes contained in these Letters will probably be found interesting; but they possess in an eminent degree an excellence for which Familiar Letters are esteemed peculiarly valuable. They truly exhibit in pure unaffected language an undisguised picture of the heart, and serve to illustrate the character of the Writers; Writers too who have meritoriously approved themselves in the eye of the Public, and who must hereafter be distinguished in the History of Literature.

Mrs. SHERIDAN* TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, Nov. 11th, 1758.

DEAR SAM,

I RECEIVED yours by the last Irish mail, and am much obliged to you for the notice you have given me in regard to the children. I should indeed have fixed them with you entirely as Boarders on my leaving Ireland; but as I expected to have returned long before this time, I thought that for so short a space, and especially as the exercise of walking in summer might be of use to them, that they could not be the worse for spending their evenings at home. However, as I am convinced of the justness of your reflections on the subject, I would by all means have them lodged in your house, and the sooner they are removed the better. Though I have an entire reliance as well on your care as that of Mrs. Whyte, yet I should not choose, at this distance from myself, to have the

* This Lady is an exception to Mr. Boswell's general rule; she was a person Dr. Johnson and He highly valued, and always spoke well of. See *Memoirs of the Life of Johnson*, vol. i. pp. 352, 3, 4, *passim*, also Note on the preceding Remarks, p. 9.

the children deprived of the servant they have been so long used to. I know it would be a great hardship on the poor younger one in particular to lose nurse who has always hitherto been their attendant.* They must necessarily have some-
body

* In a work printed by Faulder, London, this present year 1798, it is said, "Richard-Brinsley Sheridan, Esq. was born at Quilca near Dublin, in the year 1752. At the age of six years his Father, then compelled to quit his native country, brought him into England, and placed him at Harrow School, under the care of Dr. Sumner, who was at that time Head-Master, &c." The ingenious author has been greatly misled in almost every particular here advanced respecting Mr. Sheridan, as is evident, from the above Letters written by his Mother, and the circumstances of his birth related in a preceding page which, to save the trouble of turning back, take briefly as follows. . . . Mr. Sheridan, the Father, at the time of his son's birth, and some years before and after, lived at No. 12 in Dorset-street, Dublin; a new house built for him by a Mr. Orpin, now occupied by a Mr. Kindillon, directly opposite to the house in which Captain Solomon Whyte, Mrs. Sheridan's maternal uncle, then lived. The situation, though very inconvenient, being at a great distance from the Theatre, was fixed on at the special instance of her uncle, who was in a very declining state of health, and wished to have her near him; for she was his favourite niece, and they were mutually fond of each other. It pleased the Almighty to call him to his eternal home, March the 17th, 1757. In this house Richard-Brinsley Sheridan was born, at a season when his Father's occupation in town rendered his presence indispensably necessary, towards the latter end of October 1751; not in 1752, and consequently not at Quilca, which is not near Dublin. Young Sheridan was not brought to London by his Father in the year 1758; but was sent over late in the year 1759, and, not 'till after the Christmas vacation, in the year 1762, was placed at Harrow School; for which we have the authority of the Letters before us. If any fastidious critic should carp at the nicety of this statement, the circumstances have been taken up by several writers in succession, and all erroneously. It is nevertheless clear, that whatever is thought worthy of record, should be honestly and truly recorded; if, in such a case, so many mistakes could be committed, it may at least serve to shew our younger Readers, that when national vanity, the interest of individuals, or the prejudice of party, guides the author's pen, which is too much the case in both ancient and modern histories, though written by a Hume or a Gibbon, they are at best but ingenious Romances, and not to be relied on.

body to dress them, wash for them, and mend their cloaths; and if nurse can be made any otherwise useful in the family, I dare say she will be very willing to do her best. I would have her still attend them, and the terms for her can be as easily adjusted as for the children. If you want a bed or beds on the occasion, you may be supplied from the Blind-quay.

I can't at present inform you what stay we shall make here: Mr. Sheridan is now at Oxford, where he purposed to give a Course of Lectures; how long that will detain him I can't say; but I do not expect him to return this month. I sent your letter to him and waited for his answer, otherwise you should have heard from me sooner. When he writes to Dr. Leland or Mr. Tickell, he will take notice of what you say in regard to H. S. mean time if that branch of instruction which they offered you can be in any wise made worth your while, I think you would not do well to refuse it, as it may be a means of introducing you to something much better. I only say this as my own sentiments, for Mr. Sheridan did not give me his opinion on the subject.

As to Theatrical matters, I can say but little of them; but I doubt Mr. Sheridan, without a much better prospect than the present, will hardly be induced to take the burthen again upon his shoulders; for my own part I think we have had a sufficient proof how far Dublin is to be depended upon; I speak in general, for I am sure we have some very worthy friends there. Be that as it may, I can't as yet speak with certainty concerning our designation after Christmas. Mr. Sheridan's absence (for I have had him but for a few days with me these five weeks, and then very much engaged) leaves me ignorant of what our motions are to be at that time; but I have hope I shall then have it in my power personally to thank you for your attention to my poor little ones.

ones. You don't tell me whether they are going on with their French. Give my blessing to them, and tell them we shall meet ere 'tis long.

Pray make my compliments to Mrs. Whyte: I hope she has better health than when I saw her, and is by this time better reconciled to Ireland.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours most sincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

P. S. My Brother and Sister are both very well, and wish to be affectionately remembered to you. Dr. Lucas, your old Friend, is perfectly recovered; he returned a few days ago from Harwich, where he had been on account of his health, and to attend Lord Charlemont, whom he has restored surprisingly. The Doctor was very particular in his enquiries about you, and requested I would assure you he has your welfare extremely at heart.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MARCH 29TH, 1759.

DEAR SAM,

WHEN I look at the date of your last letter, I am ashamed that I have not answered it long before now: I will however endeavour to account for my omission in few words. When I received yours I was at Bath, where my drinking the waters, together with the general dissipation of the place, quite disqualified me either for writing or reading; to say the truth, I believe I never had either a pen or a book in my hand the whole time I was there; I should notwithstanding have written to you, but as I every day expected to have the business which detained Mr. Knowles concluded, so I intended
by

by him, at his return to Dublin, to have writ to you at large on the subject of your letter. This made me defer writing from day to day, when at my return to London, the sickness and death of poor Miss Pennington (who was in the same house with me) so took up my attention, that it was a great while before I could think of any thing else. This was the true state of my situation, and I have nothing farther to offer in excuse for my silence.*

The morning of the day in which our deceased friend took her illness, your name happening to be mentioned, she asked after you with great kindness, and told me many civilities which you had formerly shewn her. Yesterday I opened a writing-box and a little parcel she left me, in which I found some curiosities of value, and several interesting papers, which she had not before shewn me; among others, a very pretty Poem addressed to her by you it was enclosed in a letter of my sister Chamberlaine's. We used to set you down in the list of her admirers. She was in every sense indeed an estimable Being; a lively, sensible companion, and a sincere and discreet friend; naturally affectionate and obliging, her good offices were never wanting where she thought she could be of service. Books to be sure are a great source of entertainment in the gloom of retirement; but the mind cannot be always in a disposition for reading, and there are times and occasions which require more active consolation. Her agreeable conversation was the balm of my solitary hours, and her company in Mr. Sheridan's frequent absences, to which his
avocations

* Miss P. was once an admired star in the literary hemisphere. Whether or not there be any writings of hers extant, I cannot ascertain. The volume of well-written letters, containing an unfortunate Mother's Advice to her Absent Daughter, supposed to be addressed to this Lady, was a Posthumous Publication.

avocations indispensably oblige him, was to me a material acquisition; my dear Sam, I shall miss her very much; but this is selfish; don't condemn me for it.

Mr. Sheridan is now at Cambridge; but I expect his immediate return. I hope every thing goes on to your wishes. How are my dear little ones? do they often talk of me? keep me alive in their remembrance. I have all a mother's anxiety about them, and long to have them over with me; but I believe we shall not send for them till the latter end of June, and then I hope to see them. I mention this as a matter of business, as I know your number is limited, and, being apprized of our intentions in time, you may the better regulate your own measures and suit your convenience accordingly. If you will send me your account for the children, by nurse, when they leave you, I hope Mr. Sheridan will discharge it the first opportunity. But as to the Bond Debt I can say nothing; that is a more serious object, and I fear we must trespass on your friendship to wait sometime longer, till our affairs come about, and we can get a better hold of the world.

The main object of your last, requiring maturer deliberation and precision, I must defer to a more favourable opportunity. Let me hear from you soon, and in my answer I promise to be particular and explicit on the points you propose. This is a sad scrawl, very unfit to come before so excellent a penman; but I have neither time nor spirits to copy it fair: I hope you will be able to decypher it. Remember me to my brother and sister in Kevin's-street. I shall be very glad to hear of your prospering in your present and future undertakings; and am,

Dear Sam,

Your sincere Friend, &c. &c.

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

WINDSOR, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1759.

DEAR SAM,

MY Children are, thank God, arrived safe and well; they did not come down to me here till last Thursday; they staid a week in London, nurse being willing to wait for their baggage, which 'twas proper she should see safely lodged before she left town. I can't say they do their preceptor as much credit as George Cunningham does, for their progress has been rather small for eighteen months; but, mistake me not, I don't say this, as is too much the absurd custom of parents, by way of throwing a reflection on the teacher, of whose care and abilities I am perfectly satisfied; it is the interest of the master to do every thing to the best of his power for the advantage of his pupils; my children's backwardness I impute to themselves; owing to their natural slowness, their illness and long and frequent absences, not to any want of attention in you towards them.

Mr. Sheridan sends his best wishes to you, and is very much pleased to hear you are going on so well: he says, he is very sure you will make yourself conspicuous in your profession. I gave him your account, and he desires me to tell you, the instant it is in his power he will discharge as much of it as he can.

I believe you are not a stranger to the bad situation of our affairs in Ireland; he is here working his way through difficulties, and nothing but the prospect of having his labours crowned with success could support him under them; meantime as all our resources from your side are cut off, we are obliged to be oeconomists, till our affairs are settled upon a better footing, which we hope next winter will effect. I assure you, Sam, Mr. Sheridan laments the not having it in
his

his power at this distance to assist you in the manner he once hoped to do.

I am glad to hear you have recovered your health and spirits, and with them I hope your peace of mind. In truth I believe I have inverted the order of things here, and have placed the effects before their cause. Be that as it may, I wish them to you all together, with an additional acquisition of reputation and fortune. There I think I have put matters to rights, and given the words their proper places; for according to the temporal order of things, in your way of life, money most assuredly waits on reputation.

Mr. Sheridan and I shall be glad to hear from you at your leisure.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours sincerely, &c.

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs. SHERIDAN TO Mr. WHYTE.

DECEMBER 2D, 1759.

DEAR SAM,

I OUGHT to make an apology for not answering yours of the 28th of August, if I had received it in any reasonable time within the date; but it did not come to my hands till the 7th of November. Mrs. Gregory, indeed, very politely excused herself for this delay, occasioned, as she obligingly expressed herself, in the letter in which she enclosed yours, by the desire she had to deliver your letter to me with her own hands, which she was prevented from doing by illness, till the bad weather came on and cut off all hopes of being able to get out of town; for I am still at Windsor.

I am extremely glad to hear from all hands that your school goes on so well: I have not the least doubt of your

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making a figure in your profession. Indeed it is but a small compliment to say this in the place where you now are; for I believe you have but few candidates for fame in your line; a moderate subsistence in the dog-trot way is all they expect or look for. Mr. Sheridan has gone a good way in the grammar; but as he only writes a little now and then, by snatches, as he is at present engaged in another course, which is to consist of eight lectures, and which chiefly engrosses his time and attention, he has not near completed the grammar; but, you may assure yourself, he will send it you, together with some other useful hints, as soon as it is perfect enough to be of use to you. He is very much obliged to you for your friendly behaviour, and it redoubles his concern at not having it yet in his power to acquit himself towards you as he thinks you deserve. But as you cannot be a stranger to the ruinous state of our affairs on your side the water, so you may imagine those events must, in some measure, even influence the progress of matters here; however, Mr. Sheridan is determined to persevere in what he thinks a right path, and I trust in God we shall succeed in the end.

The two boys are getting on in their learning, and I endeavour to assist them, particularly in the English branches, as well as I can. I should often be at a loss what to do with my time in this unsociable place, if I had not the children, with whom I find sufficient employment. We don't think of seeing London till after Christmas.

Mr. Sheridan sends his best wishes to you; the children their love.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours most truly,

FRANCES-SHERIDAN.

MRS.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

WINDSOR, MARCH 21ST, 1760.

DEAR SAM,

THOUGH your last letter was without date, I am sure it has been long enough written to make me ashamed of not having answered it before; if I were not conscious that it was really not in my power to do it sooner. At the time I received it Mr. Sheridan was in London, and he had not been at home long enough, to give me an opportunity to talk to him about the request you made, before I was obliged to go thither on particular business, which detained me ten days. Since my return to Windsor, which is now a fortnight, I have scarce been a day well. A disorder at my stomach, attended with violent head aches, pesters me perpetually, and disqualifies me almost for every thing; but particularly for writing.

Mr. Sheridan told me, on seeing your letter, that he would with great pleasure undertake the task you mentioned; but to do any thing that would be of material use to you, would take up a much longer time than you are aware of; he says, those very things you spoke of, would be at least a month's work to him, to do in such a manner as would be of any benefit to you; however, that would not deter him, if his time, the only thing he now can call his own, were not at this juncture extremely precious to him. This is not occasioned through want of leisure, as here he can have but few avocations; but his health is so precarious, having lately been violently attacked with his old disorder, that he is obliged to lay hold of every interval of ease, to pursue a very arduous task which he has set about. His Lectures are finished; but were not done time enough to give them in London, as he intended. He is now engaged in a very extensive plan, in which the English Language will be set in a light,

light, that few think it capable of receiving. I could heartily wish, that you were within reach, that he might communicate his labours to you. You, who have so much considered it yourself, must receive a particular pleasure from what he could shew you on the subject, as he often speaks of your indefatigable enquiries, and commendable curiosity on this occasion. He has assured me that you shall be the first to whom he will communicate what he has written, as soon as it is in a form fit for an advantageous perusal; how soon this will be I can't pretend to say; I can only answer for my not failing to remind him of you, though I am sure his own inclinations would lead him to serve you more materially than in this point were it in his power. The time I hope will come; for we have had a sufficient share of disappointments; patience, courage and industry, however, will surmount every thing.

In a former Letter I wrote to you, I mentioned two things you quite forgot in your answer. The one was, the Letter I sent to Mrs. Katherns, which I should have been glad to know if she received; the other was the enquiries after the poor little family of Mr. Fish;* the account I have since had of his death has been a melancholy answer to those.

You told me you would let me know *under seal of secrecy*, why a certain person interfered so warmly about Mrs. —. I should be glad you would explain this. I assure you your information shall be a secret, except to Mr. Sheridan, to whom I believe you would impart it as soon as to me. A secret delivered to me, *viva voce*, might be lodged safely within my own breast; but those communicated by Letter hazard a participation, as I have no correspondence that I don't shew. I only mention this, that, in case you would wish nobody to know

* The Rev. Mr. John Fish, M. A. Chaplain to the Blue-coat Hospital, married to her elder sister, Ann, deceased; there were but the two Sisters.

know of what you have to say but myself, you need not write it.

Mr. Sheridan and the children all desire to be cordially remembered to you.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 26TH, 1761.

DEAR SAM,

CONSIDERING I am not remarkable for my expedition in answering letters, I think I need not make any apology for not acknowledging the receipt of yours of December 20th, sooner.

I shall just briefly dispatch the contents of that, having matters of more consequence to speak to.

I need not tell you how sincerely glad both Mr. Sheridan and I are at every success and every fresh mark of approbation you meet with; I think Nature cut you out for the profession, and I can have no doubt but your own industry and application have made large improvements on her handy-work. I am gratified to hear that you expect to have the children of families of so much respectability and consequence as those you mention; this must needs give an éclat to your school, if you yourself was less qualified than I am sure you are for the important task of education.

Perhaps you were 'more nice than wife' in burning your English Grammars; it shews however a diffidence very commendable at your years. Mr. Sheridan will be extremely glad to see what you intend by the advice of your friends to publish,

publish, when an opportunity offers. I hope you will send it to him, and he flatters himself that *advice* will not be the only thing that he will soon have it in his power to send you.

He stands here in high reputation, with a prospect of being every day more and more esteemed. The late King's death, which shut up the Theatres for a time, together with the necessity the Managers were under of bringing on the stage five new pieces (Farces and Comedies) has prevented him appearing so often as it was expected; this, however, tho' it has a little curtailed his profit, has been no hindrance to his reputation, which stands very high in all the parts he has been seen in. He is now preparing for another course of Practical Lectures, which he intends to read and then to publish. I could wish distance did not render communication so inconvenient, as I am sure you might be benefited by some lights from him.

He has as yet been immerfed in too great a variety of business (not to mention private vexations) to be able to put the finishing hand to what I purposed sending to you.

As for myself you will see how my solitary hours were employed last winter at Windsor, if you have time enough to bestow the reading on the Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph, which will soon be published by G. Faulkner.

I had this day an interview with Mrs. Gardiner, requested by her last night by an exceedingly urgent note. The conversation was long and interesting, in which, though I could perceive strong prejudices and great partiality in her own favour, she threw much blame on you. I cannot now enter into particulars; but hereafter, when I am less exposed to interruptions, will give you my best opinion and advice upon the subject. I own her visit was not attended with the consequences which I looked for. What have you done with your two Tragedies? I expected Mrs. Gardiner would have brought

brought them with her, and apprized Mr. Sheridan on the subject. He says, he will answer for having one of them performed, and will not only undertake the part you wrote for him; but will take care the whole shall be advantageously cast and prepared for representation. A friend of yours has already sketched out an Epilogue, and I have been promised a Prologue by another; so far matters are in train as to that; but the other, Mr. Sheridan fears, from the account I gave him, will not do for the stage: he thinks the subject unfit for representation, and too like the story of Oedipus.*

I must stop here or lose the opportunity of sending you this by the present conveyance. I am, in the Mercantile Style, for Self and Company,

Dear Sam,

Sincerely yours,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

Mrs.

* This kind and flattering offer came too late. Both the Tragedies, sharing the same fate with the Grammars, having been committed to the flames. . . . The first of them was the story of Abradatas and Panthea, taken from the 5th Book of Xenophon's Cyropædia. The other was taken from an anonymous pamphlet printed by Geo. Faulkner, 1751, entitled "ELEONORA, or a Tragical and True Case of Incest," reported by the author, who declares he intimately knew and was in confidence with the parties, to have happened in the North of Scotland, Anno 1685. It is precisely the same story, with some local variations, on which Mr. Walpole founded his Tragedy of the Mysterious Mother. The Right Hon. Author of that piece, though he lays the scene at Narbonne in France, gives us to understand, on the authority alledged of Archbishop Tillotson, that it was a matter of fact well known in England, and several writers are mentioned, who before him had hit upon the subject; but there is no notice taken of a book prior to any of them, where we have since discovered it, and there it is stated that the crime was perpetrated on the Continent. Bishop Taylor, in his Ductor Dubitantium, 1659, book i. chap. iii. sect. 3d, cites this identical story, from Comitulus, as of a strange and rare case happening at Venice, proposed for the determination of a congregation of learned and prudent persons; we must suppose of Divines. Here are three Authors, whose credentials it might be rash to call

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 25TH, 1762.

DEAR SAM,

IT is so long since you and I have corresponded that I really do not recollect whether you are a letter in my debt or I in yours; for my own credit's sake I wish it may be the former; but be it as it may I will not omit the opportunity of Mr. Rainsford's return, to send you Mr. Sheridan's Dissertation, which includes part of his plan. 'Tis addressed, as you see, to a great man; when you read it you will not be at a loss to discover, that the person addressed is our present first Minister. It has been as well received by him as we could possibly wish, and even beyond the expectation of our friends. He expressed himself highly pleased with the design, and sent Mr. Sheridan word it should receive all countenance and encouragement. Lord Bute is a man of his word, and every body knows his great influence, so that the affair now seems likely to become of great importance. The Course of Lectures which Mr. Sheridan is now reading in the city is attended in a manner that shews the people more warm and earnest on the subject than can well be conceived; his auditory seldom consisting of less than five hundred people, and this is the utmost the hall will contain; many have been disappointed for want of room, and he is strenuously solicited to repeat the Course again immediately in the same place.

call in question; one says Scotland; another, England; a third Venice, and, a fourth, not yet quoted, pleads an alibi, and fixes, beyond doubt, the real Scene of action at Prague, in Bohemia: O, the faith of historians! credit the enormous tale who will, I'd as soon believe that Romulus and Remus were nursed by a wolfe. The plain inference to be drawn is, for the honour of human nature, no such thing ever happened; but that the whole is merely a fiction of casuists, as a basis to support an opinion.

place.* This I believe he will comply with, though he is to give another Course next month at Spring-Gardens. Last Monday evening Charles for the first time exhibited himself as a little orator. He read Eve's Speech to Adam from Milton, beginning "O thou! for whom, and from whom I was form'd," &c. as his Father had taken a deal of pains with him, and he has the advantage of a fine ear and a fine voice, he acquitted himself in such a manner as astonished every body.... He purposes in his next Course to shew him in all the variety of style that is used in English composition, and hopes in a very little time to make him complete in his own art. Dick has been at Harrow School since Christmas;† as he probably may fall into a bustling life, we have a mind to accustom him early to shift for himself; Charles's domestic and sedentary turn is best suited to a home education * * * * this is the present system of your little old acquaintance.

I shall be glad of your opinion on the Dissertation, as also to know what progress you yourself have made in this particular branch in your school, which I am very glad to hear by Mr. Rainsford is in great reputation. I am obliged to break off, as I have been interrupted a dozen times since I sat down to write. Indeed I am so distressed for want of a room to myself, that it discourages me from attempting any

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thing,

* Mr. Sheridan admitted in print that to three Courses he had upwards of sixteen hundred subscribers at a guinea each, besides occasional auditors, and the benefit arising to him afterwards from the publication of the Lectures, (price half-a-guinea in boards) which had a rapid sale, so that his emolument on the whole must have been considerable indeed.

† This account (February 25th, 1762) little accredits the information of those who place Richard-Brinsley Sheridan at Harrow-School in the year 1758, as noticed in the preceding pages.

thing, though I have this winter made a shift to scribble something that you shall hear of another time.

Adieu, Dear Sam,

I am yours sincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

P. S. My sister Chamberlaine desires me to inform you (you may be assured I did not hint the subject) that she had paid Mrs. some money that you had *left in her hands for that use*, which she expects you'll acquit her of. I leave my brother Dick to answer for himself.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MARCH 30TH, 1762.

DEAR SAM,

I HOPE you have long before this received my letter, together with the packet which I sent you by the hands of Mr. Rainsford, and that I have made my peace with you on account of my long silence.

I should have answered yours of the 16th past, immediately, but that I waited in hopes of being able to give you some satisfactory account of your friend Mr. Armstrong, and am very glad to inform you, that I happened to have interest enough with a very worthy gentleman to get him a small employment, which he has thought worth his acceptance. Upon my first application to this gentleman (which was directly on the receipt of your letter) he told me he had nothing then in his power; but that I might depend on him when any thing offered. I then got my Brother to write to Mr. Adair, who returned the same answer, and I was afraid the young man might have continued here a long time without succeeding, when my friend, Commissioner Tom, came himself to tell me he had a place worth sixty pounds a year,

year, and apartments, &c. with it. I understood from him that he had a mind to go abroad; but as nothing eligible was to be procured in that way, I thought that this might be better than nothing. I writ to him, and desired him to wait on Commissioner Tom. He did so, and Mr. Tom has since informed me that he accepted of the place, and purposed going down to Portsmouth, where he is stationed; but I have not yet seen him, though it is now above a week since this affair was settled, which I am the more surpris'd at, as I requested he would call on me. I suppose he will call on me before he leaves town (if he be not gone;) but as this looks a little remiss, I have been the more particular in my account to you, lest he should have neglected writing to you.

Mr. Sheridan is much obliged to you for the great delicacy with which you make your application, in giving it the air rather of requesting a favour than making a just demand. Few people, Sam, can *think*, much less act, generously, or even genteelly. He will not fail to send you the sum mentioned in about a month's time at farthest. Indeed he could have wished you had been less modest on this occasion, and put in your claim with the rest of the creditors, who, you I believe must know, have already received each a dividend by the hands of Mr. Sheen. I hope another year or so will set him clear, and that he will then be able to enjoy the fruits of his labour, which hitherto has not been the case. He has had but very indifferent health all the winter; but is now, thank God, much better. He purposed going through a new Course of Lectures in the middle of April, and will give them alternately in the city, and at the court end of the town. You know the inhabitants of those two quarters are as distinct as if they were in two different countries.

I should be glad to know how you like the Dissertation and the Address to Lord Bute. I believe I told you in my last
that

that he had received it very well, and promised the plan all countenance and encouragement.

Mr. Sheridan and the little ones desire to be remembered cordially to you. Mrs. Chamberlaine has been extremely ill and does not yet leave her room ; my brother is very well.

I am, Dear Sam,

Most sincerely yours, &c.

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

P. S. Not finding myself worth a frank when I came to fold up this letter, I postponed sending it till this day, April 1st. No news of Mr. Armstrong !

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MAY 31ST, 1759.

DEAR SAM,

THOUGH my last Letter to you is unanswered, I think myself obliged to write to you again, and should indeed have done it much sooner, if a tedious indisposition had not confined me to my room, (and part of the time to my bed) for three weeks: It was the epidemical disorder which, we hear, was all over Europe, and in which I shared very severely.

When I last wrote to you, I, in Mr. Sheridan's name, promised to answer the request, which you in so kind and modest a manner, but just proposed; on which account it redoubles both Mr. Sheridan's and my uneasiness that we cannot keep our word. I shall however reap this one advantage from the concern I have felt on this occasion, that it will teach me for the future never to make a promise, the power of fulfilling which depends upon contingencies. When I writ last, which was, I think, in March, Mr. Sheridan then
proposed

proposed giving another Course of Lectures in April in London, after which he had a prospect (which then appeared a certainty) of receiving considerable advantages from a journey to Scotland, which was to have taken place before this time. But in both these designs he has been disappointed. In regard to the first, having left some printing work to be done, which was necessary previous to the new Course of Lectures to be delivered here, he went out of town for a fortnight, all which time was lost; for on his return he found nothing done of the preparatory business; this having put him back a good deal, by the time he had got in readiness, the illness which I have mentioned seized on him, and though his lasted but a few days, yet the complaint so universally prevailed all over London, that for a time public entertainments were but little attended, and the fine weather advancing reduced the number of his auditors so much, many going out of town who would have been of the number, that he found it would by no means answer his purpose to read a third Course; so that all hopes of advantage from that were cut off at once. In regard to his Scotch journey, the many reasons which deterred him from that, would be too long to tell you; but he found they had been so dilatory in his absence, and so much departed from the original plan laid down by him, through the ignorance or officiousness of some who had got some share of the conduct of it, that he was advised by his principal friends there, not to be concerned with them, till they had put matters upon a better footing; and as he found it would be difficult and troublesome to effect his chief design (that of the Academy) this year, he thought a visit, merely for his own advantage, would not at this juncture appear well to them, and therefore he dropt all thoughts of it. I believe I need not tell you, that these two disappointments have a good deal distressed us; especially as he was to make
a payment

a payment to his creditors in Dublin this very month. However uneasy it may make a man not to have it in his power to discharge creditors from whom he has no reason to expect indulgences, I assure you it makes me infinitely more unhappy to disappoint one whose good natured forbearance I have already experienced, and from whose friendship I have no disagreeable consequences to apprehend. Mr. Sheridan is however still not without hopes of being able in less than a month, to discharge some part of his load, and if he is not again disappointed, you shall not.

Mr. Sheridan's last Course of Lectures are now printing; as soon as they are ready he will send you over the book. We shall soon go some where out of the noise and dust of London, and Mr. Sheridan will employ himself this summer in writing his English Dictionary, which we have reason to hope will be a successful work.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours most sincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

The children send their love to you.

MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 29TH, 1762.

DEAR SAM,

IT was not in *revenge* that I did not answer yours of the 2d of October sooner. The truth is, since my return to town from Windsor, I have been much employed though often interrupted by intervals of bad health, which of late have frequently returned on me. I have however mustered up spirits enough to write . . . what do you think? Why, a Comedy! which is now in rehearsal at Drury-lane. I had formed my plan, and nearly finished the scenes last summer at Windsor (the place of my inspiration,) when I came to town,
and

and shewed it to a few people ; what was said to me on the occasion encouraged me to take some pains in the finishing of it. Mr. Garrick was pressing to see it, and accordingly I read it to him myself. What his opinion of it is, you may judge by his immediately requesting it to be put into his hands, and undertaking to play the *second* character, a comic, and very original one.* Mr. Sheridan is to play the first, one of a graver cast, and a great deal of variety, and which requires a considerable actor to perform. My first theatrical essay has so far met with an almost unprecedented success; most of *us*, poor authors, find a difficulty in getting our pieces on the stage, and perhaps are obliged to dangle after Managers a season or two: I on the contrary was solicited to give mine as soon as it was seen. It is to come out early in January (the best part of the winter) and as it is admirably well cast, I have tolerable expectations of its succeeding.

Mr. Sheridan has written to Mr. Sheen, to give you one of his books which he will soon receive from hence. He is now, as I mentioned to you formerly, busied in the English Dictionary, which he is encouraged to pursue with the more alacrity, as his Majesty has vouchsafed him such a mark of Royal Favour. I suppose you must have heard, that he has granted him a pension of two hundred pounds a year, merely as an encouragement to his undertaking, and this without solicitation, which makes it the more valuable.†

He

* See the Note annexed at the end of this Letter.

† Mr. Boswell, always ready to detract from Mr. Sheridan, and edge in a compliment to Johnson at another's expence, contrives to give an invidious twist to this mark of Royal Favour, stating, as noticed in our Remarks, that, " Mr. Sheridan's Pension was granted to him as a sufferer in the cause of Government," which this account of Mrs. Sheridan's, confirmed by the printed address to Lord Bute, clearly refutes, and shews Mr. Boswell was greatly misinformed, or wilfully deviates from the truth.

He intends giving a new Course of Lectures in March; the preparing of which, together with his getting ready in the Comedy, (his part being a very long one) will fully take up his time the remainder of the winter; whatever hours he can make beside must be employed in the Dictionary, as he does not purpose playing any other characters; nor would he have appeared at all this season, if my play could have been got up well without him, as he has been far from being well these two months past.

I know not whether Mr. Armstrong ever gave you any account of himself. The circumstance which I mentioned to you he afterwards cleared up, in a way which was not at that time satisfactory either to me or himself; however it is now over; a *failure* on his side occasioned his losing the little place which was ready for his acceptance; but this, as he begged of me not to mention, I charge you never to take notice of it, to any of his friends: Perhaps he has done better; for on his missing that, I got him so well recommended, that he was sent with the army to Portugal in a very good station, where I suppose he now is.

Your former little pupils are all very well, and send their love to you. Mr. Sheridan joins me in wishing you all success.

I am, Dear Sam,

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

MRS.

* *Mr. Garrick was pressing to see it, &c. See page preceding.* This behaviour of Garrick does him infinite honour; but the particular compliment to Mrs. Sheridan, as a writer, in her modest way of relating it, does not appear in its full force; which is greatly heightened by the consideration, that at the time Sheridan and he were upon very unfriendly terms. Davies on the subject says "Notwithstanding it was become impossible to adjust differences between the Manager and Mr. Sheridan, in such a manner as to bring them on the same Stage, and upon the usual terms of acting, yet when Mrs. Sheridan's Comedy of the
Discovery

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MRS. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

LONDON, MAY 12TH, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I RECEIVED yours by the hands of Mr. Sheridan, whose sudden arrival not a little surpris'd me. Though I cannot plead guilty to the charge of not answering your letters; yet I do not really well know how to defend myself; for I cannot take upon me to assert, merely from memory, that I answered *all* your letters; but can venture to say, from the general tenour of my conduct, that I am sure it is impossible, that I could have received so many from you without answering them. *One* letter I know I was in your debt when Mr. Sheridan went over, which I commisioned him to answer personally, and if, as you say, you had written three before that, I either did not get them, or you did not get my answers. But to have done with justifications (which between friends are always best when shortest) I am extremely glad to hear you are established so advantageously, with so good a character, which I have no doubt you deserve, and with such desirable prof-

Q

pects

Discovery was offered to Mr. Garrick, he accepted it, and consented that Mr. Sheridan should play the principal part in the play, and receive for his labour the advantage of two nights' profits, besides those for the Author. . . . He was indeed so warm in behalf of the Discovery, that he assured a Publisher, who afterwards bought a share in it, that it was one of the best Comedies he ever read, and that he could not do better than to lay out his money in so valuable a purchase." . . . *Memoirs of Garrick* as before, vol. 1. p. 310.

Observe, my young Readers! what a difference in conclusions a few words may create. Here are two writers, without the smallest intention to mislead, perfectly agreed in the principal point, yet by a small variation of phrase, throwing a quite different light on the accessories. Mr. Davies, in the usual routine of his profession, gives Mr. Garrick the credit of accepting the Comedy, purely as a matter of favour. Mrs. Sheridan, on the contrary, more naturally from her feelings on the occasion, without assuming to herself any extraordinary airs of merit, in pure simplicity of heart, ascribes the compliment to his judgment, and the probable expectations of success. And that this is the proper and true construction to be put upon it, Mr. Garrick's subsequent conversation with the publisher abundantly evinces.

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pects before you. Mr. Sheridan expresses himself much obliged to you for your friendship ; for which you have my warmest acknowledgements.

And now, Sam, not by way of compensation, for that is not in my power to make you ; but as a sort of little regale in your own way, for want of other matter, I will send you the result of a morning's meditation.

ODE TO PATIENCE.

Unaw'd by threats, unmov'd by force,

My steady Soul pursues her course,

Collected, calm, resign'd ;

Say, you who search with curious eyes

The source whence human actions rise,

Say, whence this turn of mind ?

'Tis Patience. . . . Lenient Goddess, hail !

Oh ! let thy votary's vows prevail,

Thy threaten'd flight to stay ;

Long hast thou been a welcome guest,

Long reign'd an inmate in this breast,

And rul'd with gentle sway.

Thro' all the various turns of fate,

Ordain'd me in each several state,

My wayward lot has known ;

What taught me silently to bear,

To curb the sigh, to check the tear,

When sorrow weigh'd me down ?

'Twas Patience. . . . Temperate Goddess, stay !

For still thy dictates I obey,

Nor yield to Passion's Power ;

Tho' by injurious foes borne down,

My fame, my toil, my hopes o'erthrown,

In one ill-fated hour.

When

When robb'd of what I held most dear,
 My hands adorn'd the mournful bier
 Of her I lov'd so well;
 What, when mute sorrow chain'd my tongue,
 As o'er the sable hearse I hung,
 Forbade the tide to swell?

'Twas Patience! . . . Goddesses ever calm!
 Oh! pour into my breast thy balm,
 That antidote to pain;
 Which flowing from thy nectar'd urn,
 By chymistry divine can turn
 Our losses into gain.

When sick and languishing in bed,
 Sleep from my restless couch had fled;
 (Sleep, which even pain beguiles,)
 What taught me calmly to sustain
 A feverish being rack'd with pain,
 And dress'd my looks in smiles?

'Twas Patience! . . . Heaven-descended Maid!
 Implor'd, flew swiftly to my aid,
 And lent her fostering breast;
 Watch'd my sad hours with parent care,
 Repell'd the approaches of despair,
 And sooth'd my soul to rest.

Say, when dis sever'd from his side,
 My friend, protector, and my guide,
 When my prophetic soul,
 Anticipating all the storm,
 Saw danger in its direst form,
 What could my fears controul?

'Twas

'Twas Patience! . . . Gentle Goddess, hear!
 Be ever to thy suppliant near,
 Nor let one murmur rise;
 Since still some mighty joys are given,
 Dear to her soul, the gifts of Heaven,
 The sweet domestic ties.

I will not now take up your time or my own with any affected uneasiness about my Verses, by way of deprecating your censure, &c. I know you will like them for the sake of the Author: and in your hands I have nothing to fear from the severity of the Critic.

Mr. Sheridan and the children join in being affectionately remembered to you.

I am, Dear Sam,

Sincerely yours, &c.

FRANCES SHERIDAN.

This Ode to Patience is not a common-place rhapsody of sombrous declamation which youthful poets dream, and, those especially of the female class, are wont to think so charming. In every stanza, almost in every line, the amiable writer has reference to some peculiar distress, to which, at one time or other, her hard condition had exposed her. She has not given the incidents as they occurred, in an exact chronological series; but rather consulted poetical effect, more consonant to her own feelings, and the order of nature. In the last stanza but one, the subject of which claims precedence in point of time, she alludes to the fatal riot that took place at the Theatre, on the second representation of Mahomet, the 2d of March, 1754, which eventually proved the ruin of her husband, and in a moment totally eclipsed the flattering prospects of better days. That evening she was peaceably sitting at home, in conversation with a friend, the person to whom these Letters are addressed; when a Man, horror in his countenance, breathless and pale, without ceremony

mony rushed into the parlour. . . . Oh, Madam ! Smock-alley is in flames ! . . . In flames ? ! . . . Yes, all in a blaze, Madam. . . . She rose, and looking wistfully at the door, advanced a step or two towards it ; but a little recovering herself, in a half-smothered, under voice, she scarcely articulated, Where is your Master ? . . . At the house ; all is uproar and distraction, and I just got away with my life. . . . She had a heart susceptible and feelingly alive to the calamities of her fellow-creatures.

The alarm was sudden ; it was too much :

Yet not a tear dropt ; not a sigh escaped her.

Speechless awhile and motionless she stood,

In fearful streights bewilder'd and absorpt ;

A subject for the pencil of Raphael !

What then, so tried, was her resource ? . . 'twas Patience.

With eyes uprais'd, she, for the worst prepar'd,

With pious resignation sits her down,

And her smooth cheek upon her white arm leaning,

Pensive and calm, awaits the dread event.

But she remained not long in this disconsolate posture ; the carriage stopped at the door, and Mr. Sheridan came in, unhurt. The servant, early in the disturbance, anticipating the consequence, in a panic ran home and was premature in his account ; but she overlooked his rash precipitance, and never revealed it to his Master.

Mrs. Sheridan's second Comedy, the Dupe, was brought out at Drury-lane, about the beginning of January, 1764, while Mr. Sheridan was absent in Dublin. One night at his lodgings in Crow-street, just after supper a packet was delivered to him, which on opening proved to be a copy of the Dupe, which Mrs. Sheridan, in a letter accompanying it, informed him had failed ; greatly owing, as it was thought, to some Theatrical cabals, fomented by a popular actress, who conceived her consequence had been some how injured

by

by the Sheridans. To these circumstances the fair Author manifestly alludes in the fourth stanza of her Ode to Patience, and it is more than probable, that on this very occasion it was written. However, Mr. Sheridan, though that evening he had exerted himself with great eclat in a very laborious part, I think Richard, consulting the inclinations of two or three friends present, read to them the whole Comedy through; and afterwards gratified them with the contents of another letter, which at the same time he received along with it enclosed. I cannot take upon me to say, that I retain it precisely verbatim, having never seen it but once; but I can positively affirm, it was (very nearly in the words) to the following effect:

TO MRS. SHERIDAN.

MADAM,

BELIEVE me, I am truly concerned that your Comedy has met with such severe, and, without flattery I must add, such undeserved treatment on the stage. Neither am I singular in this opinion; the rapid sale of it is an undeniable proof of its merit, which the Public have not been blind to in the closet. The demand for your piece at my shop, has been so uncommonly great, that, exclusive of the copy-money, it has enabled me to present you with the enclosed, of which I entreat your acceptance, as a small testimony of that gratitude and respect, with which I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Madam,

Your most obliged

And obedient humble servant,

ANDREW MILLAR.

To the honour of a London bookfeller, the enclosed was A BANK-BILL FOR ONE HUNDRED POUNDS sterling; the same sum which by agreement she had before received from him for the copy-right.

This speaks for itself and needs no comment.

MR.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

CHESTER, APRIL 30TH, 1764.

MY DEAR SAM,

I HAVE just time to inform you, that I landed safe to-day at three, after a good passage with abominable accommodation on board. I am setting out directly for London, and hope to reach it by Wednesday evening. Pray communicate this intelligence to Knowles, and let him know, he shall hear from me immediately after my arrival. I beg you will remember me in the kindest manner to Mr. and Mrs. Guinefs, and let them know I shall ever retain the most grateful sense of their civilities to me. You shall hear from me soon again.

I am, Dear Sam,

Very sincerely,

And affectionately yours,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

RICHMOND, MAY 12TH, 1764.

MY DEAR SAM,

I KNOW it will give you pleasure to hear, that my friends have settled matters for me in such a way, that I shall be no longer in apprehensions with regard to what my humane creditors may do. I am at present on a visit, for a few days, to a particular friend at Richmond, while Mrs. Sheridan is preparing for our expedition to Scotland; on which we shall set out in eight or ten days; so that you need not answer this, or write, till I shall have given you notice of my arrival there. One of my friends, a powerful one, has cut out an employment for me, which will place me in a conspicuous point of view, beyond the reach of my enemies; and I have reason to believe, that the thing will be done early

early next Winter. Pray tell Knowles that I should have writ to him, by this post, but that I forgot to bring some franks down with me; I am preparing some necessary papers which I will send to him on my return to town. The kind concern you took in my affairs whilst I was in Dublin, has endeared you much to me; and I hope the time is not far off, when I shall be able to make you suitable returns. Pray let me be remembered in the kindest manner to our good friends in Crow-street, and believe me to be ever

Sincerely, and

Affectionately yours, &c.

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

EDINBURGH, AUGUST 8TH, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I HAVE been so long silent, for no other reason, but that I never could find an hour in which I could sit down to write with the least satisfaction. I have past a most disagreeable time for these last three months, having never been one day free from my old complaint, and frequently confined with colds. This, together with some other circumstances, has baffled my design in coming hither. The last has been a most unfortunate year; but I may hope, from the old proverb, that things will mend soon. I shall in a few days set out for London; but have two or three visits to pay by the way; so that I do not expect to reach it in less than a fortnight or three weeks. My plan of operations is settled, and I am perfectly easy in my mind, as I think I shall be guarded against all events from without, and have little to fear but from ill health. The completion of my Grammar and Dictionary must now employ all my time, as the foundation of my future fortune;

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fortune; and I doubt not but a large superstructure may be raised on it. When that is completed, my friends have something in view for me, which will make me easy during my life; and probably enable me to provide well for my family. I received your former, with a few lines from Mrs. Guinness. Pray make my excuses to her, for not having writ any thing in return; for I esteem her much, and shall always retain a grateful sense of the civilities I met with both from her and Mr. Guinness. But indeed I had not spirits to write, nor should I have sat down to the task now, but to prevent your imputing my silence to a wrong cause. Be assured, my dear Sam, I set a great value on your friendship, as I know it to be sincere; a rare thing in this world!

Nor construe any farther my neglects
Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,
Forgets the shews of love to other men.

But I hope white hours are approaching, and then you shall hear often from me. I shall be always eager to communicate any good news to my friends, that they may participate of my satisfaction: but I have no delight in their sympathizing with me in my distress. With respect to sharing my good fortune, I could be a very prodigal; but I am a perfect miser in regard to the ill, and would keep it all to myself.

If Mr. Richard Chamberlaine be still in Dublin, remember me affectionately to him. I am pleased to hear that his affair is in so good a way; but should be glad to hear the particulars. The letter which you mention, has never come to Mrs. Sheridan's hands; for she has not received a line from you since our arrival here. Give my love to Knowles, and tell him that I had nothing to say worth paying a shilling for, and there are no franks to be had here; but I shall write to him soon.

R

My

My head is so much out of order that I can add no more;
but that I am,

Most sincerely and

Affectionately yours,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

If you answer this immediately, I shall probably receive
it on my arrival in London. Direct to Bow-street as usual.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

HARROW, SEPTEMBER 4TH, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours, soon after my
arrival here, which was delayed by a few visits on the road.
I have not yet been at London; but some of my friends have
been to see me here. They have now under deliberation
what plan will be best for me to pursue; a few days will de-
termine the most material point, and you shall immediately
know the result. Dick Chamberlaine I find is arrived; but
I have heard no particulars of him; I expect to know all
about him this evening, from Mrs. Sheridan, who has been
some days in London on business, and is to return to-day. I
shall write shortly to you again, upon important matters;
at present I only write to shew you, that I mean to be a
punctual correspondent, however little I may have to say,
and to desire that you will direct your letters to the care of
Mr. Chamberlaine, till I send you another address, *as I am
about to shift my quarters*. I beg you will make my best
compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Guinness, and believe me to
be always

Sincerely and

Affectionately yours, &c.

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

MR.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

BLOIS, OCTOBER 14TH, 1764.

YOU see, my dear SAM, by the above date, that I have carried my design into execution, of retiring for some time into France. My friends were unanimously of opinion that it was the best measure I could take, in order to have leisure to finish my work, without which I could have no farther pretensions to any favours. My state of health too made it absolutely necessary that I should remove into a better climate; for, as my disorder was gaining ground, I should not have been able to do any thing in England. The air here is inconceivably fine, and the alteration it has already made in me makes me confidently hope for a perfect cure. Mrs. Sheridan, Charles and the two girls are with me; Dick continues at Harrow. We are very busy in making all our necessary arrangements, so that I have not time at present to enter into a detail of our affairs. The journey was confoundedly expensive; but the cheapness of the place will make full amends. I could support my family here better upon a hundred pounds a year than upon five in London. We live in a very commodious cottage on the Banks of the Loire, in the suburbs of the town. This river is the most beautiful of any in France, and the country around delightful. French is spoken and taught in its greatest purity; and all other articles for the children's education are to be had at a very cheap rate. As I can now bid defiance to my merciless creditors, I shall be able to make such terms with them before my return as will make me easy for the rest of my life.

Pray make my most affectionate compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Guinefs. I was sorry I could not see him in London; but I did not think it safe to go there, and I set out for Dover the day after I heard of his arrival. I shall be alwaysⁿ
glad^y

glad to hear of their welfare, and beg you will not fail to give me accounts of them when you write; my best regards and good wishes attend also Mr. and Mrs. Calderwood. I send you enclosed a letter to Knowles, as I think you are at present better able to pay the postage than he; but don't tell him I said so. You see I use you without ceremony; I consider you as my friend; for,

I am sincerely

Yours, &c.

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Direct to me, A Monsieur, Monsieur Sheridan, chez Madame des Combes, au Bourgh St. Jean, a Blois.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

BLOIS, DECEMBER 1ST, 1764.

DEAR SAM,

I HAVE been for some time in the greatest surprise, and under the utmost uneasiness at not hearing any thing from Dublin. I wrote to you soon after my arrival here, with a letter inclosed to Knowles. I wrote at the same time to some other friends; but not a line have I had in answer. I fear, I should rather say hope, that my letters have some how miscarried; for such a neglect of my friends, in my present situation, would be insupportable. I have received much benefit from the air of this country, which is reckoned the purest in France, and I can labour hard now without feeling any ill effects from it. Mrs. Sheridan too is much better; the children too are in the highest health and spirits, and hard at work to acquire French, as they are not allowed to speak a word of English, except on Sundays. Our situation here is as comfortable as we could hope for in our present circumstances.

stances. When I know that my letters reach you I have much to write to you about. Your letter directed for me in London, did not reach that place till after my departure; but was enclosed to me some time since by my brother Chamberlaine. There were a few lines in it from a lady, which call for an answer.

I am much obliged to you, my Dear Madam, for your kind remembrance of me, and the sollicitude you express at the unhappy state of my affairs. Had Dublin abounded with such good hearts as yours, I might still have been employed in the service of my country. But I hope yet to be in a state of serving them, when I shall neither need their assistance, nor value their thanks. The ingratitude of the Public has been a general topic in all ages and countries, and a wise man is to lay his account, that he will never meet with any thing else, in return for his endeavours to serve the many-headed monster. I hope your state of health is better than it was, and that Mr. Guinness, my dear little pupil, Bob, and Dick are well. My best wishes ever attend you all.

Now, Sam, to return to you, though it is only to bid you farewell. If I do not receive an answer to this in due time, I shall be under terrible apprehensions.

Yours ever,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

Direct A Monsieur, Monsieur Sheridan, chez Madame De Combes Bourgh St. Jean, a Blois.

MR. SHERIDAN TO MR. WHYTE.

BLOIS, MAY 24TH, 1765.

DEAR SAM,

I HAVE had a long fit of my old disorder, which has lain heavy upon me for almost three months past. This malady is to me of the most mortifying nature in the world; for at a
time

time when I was pushing on vigorously a work, which it is of the utmost importance to me to finish as soon as possible, it put as effectual a stop to my progress, as if it had deprived me of the use of my hands. Its nature is to take the mind prisoner and bind up all its faculties, as the gout does those of the body. The least attention, even to the writing of a letter, becomes then an insupportable fatigue. Thoughts however continue to circulate; but they will take their own free course, and will suffer no constraint. The tyranny of thought over the mind, when the power of guiding or confining its course is taken away, is a cruel one. One train of reflection has succeeded to another in this way, without bringing any thing of pleasant with them. The several scenes and designs of my past life presented themselves at different times to view, without affording any consolation, but in the rectitude of my intentions; and upon the whole I find my situation in life, very similar to that which is admirably drawn by Pope, where in answer to the Question, What is it to be wise? He says:

'Tis but to know how little can be known,
 To see all others faults, and feel our own :
 Condemned in business or in arts to drudge,
 Without a second, or without a judge.
 Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land,
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand :
 Painful pre-eminence ! yourself to view,
 Above life's weakness and its comforts too.

One of the greatest comforts of life, I have often been cruelly disappointed in; I mean friendship: However, that shall not make me give up my expectation of still finding that best balm of an afflicted mind, in the few for whom I still feel it, and from whom I expect a return. I will believe that you are INCAPABLE of change in that respect; but wish you
 would

would give me more frequent marks that I still live in your memory. Let us have no retrospects; be a good boy for the future, and I promise you I'll keep pace with you. I find myself much better within these two or three days, and hope the warm weather will set me up. In every other respect, except that cursed disorder, I find myself much benefited by this excellent climate. Before the last attack, however, I had finished my Dictionary, and was entering upon my Grammar; I shall now try to make up lost time.

Mrs. Sheridan has finished a Comedy, which I think an excellent one, spick and span new throughout. She is now employed in concluding the Memoirs of Sidney Biddulph; to which she was solicited by abundance of people before her departure for England. She bestows many maledictions on the French, which quarrels with her tongue. The children are making great progress in it; and I have made such advances that I am their master.

The unreasonable part of the creditors, still adhere to their absurd maxims, so that I know not when I shall have it in my power to return. I am much pleased at the account you give me of Mr. Guinness; but what a plague became of your geography, when you talked of his making Blois his way to Lyons. My best wishes attend Mrs. Guinness, and her little family. Pray, Sam, write to me often; send all manner of news, good or bad; you cannot conceive what little things give pleasure at such a distance. Mrs. Sheridan and all the little ones send their loves.

I am ever sincerely

And affectionately,

Yours, &c.

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

These letters from Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, with the two former, annexed to our REMARKS on Boswell, &c. which in the strict order of time should have taken place here, include
the

the whole of what was judged necessary for the illustration and confirmation of facts on the present occasion. The following letter is in answer to one sent to Mr. Burton of London, together with a printed copy of heads of a plan laid before a select committee of the Hibernian Society, then lately instituted in Dublin, for the Improvement of Education, and for carrying Mr. Sheridan's Scheme into immediate execution.

MR. BURTON* TO MR. WHYTE.

JUNE 12TH, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

YOU see by my abhorrence of all delay, in returning an answer to your first letter, how greatly desirous I am of giving birth to that correspondence you are pleased to mention. My activity in this article is in effect a speedy return made to a first visit: which is no less an overture to future friendship, than it is an earnest of an immediate esteem. Men of letters are the game, of which I am in continual pursuit; and where I am so happy as to find the least traces of learning, like SCIPIO ÆMILIANUS, I hug the bewitching creature: and though perhaps, I may not be so fortunate as he was, to meet with a POLYBIUS, or a PANÆTIUS, yet I experience a certain degree of warmth in such a sunshine, in which I delight to wanton.

From

* Edmund Burton, Esq. M. A. Counsellor at Law, and sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. This gentleman has occasionally enriched the Common-wealth of Letters with several valuable productions. Among others, *The Satyrs of Persius, translated into English, with Notes critical and explanatory*, by Edmund Burton, Esq. Barrister at Law, appeared in 1752, which is the book to which he alludes in the latter part of the letter. . . . He was by marriage great-uncle to Mrs. Whyte, on the maternal side; a family nearly related to Serjeant Hewitt, late Lord High Chancellor of Ireland.

From hence you may naturally conclude, as I have discovered a taste and discernment in you inferior to few; that I promise myself much satisfaction, from whatever observations you will favour me with. They will excite and enliven that zeal (for I profess no more) I have for literary pursuits; which, too frequently, for want of those in whom I would wish to find the same dispositions with myself, sickens and dies away. Should you now and then communicate any thing you think curious in your reading; and sometimes send me a gem, which you have picked out of the rich mines of antiquity, that I may survey its beauties as well as yourself; you will make me happy, by keeping that flame alive.

I must confess to you, at the same time, though, in this part of the world, I can seldom converse with such a one as yourself (the little, mechanical, groveling genius, prevailing mostly hereabouts) I find a comfortable retreat, for want of action, among my books and papers: and I dare say, you are never better pleased with Tully, than when, from a too great satiety of company, which was often his case, and the very reverse of mine, he confesses himself to be most pleased amidst his books and statues. *Summum meorum studium tenet, &c.* is an expression of that great man, which at the same time that it shews the generous ardour of his mind, must needs inspire all those who view him in this light, with a fondness for his memory, that knows no bounds. But I'll tire you no longer with idle descants of this nature. I'll proceed to the contents of your letter, from which I can plainly see, that you have not read that great man's letters to Atticus in vain. Give me leave to congratulate you upon the success, that is likely to attend the establishment of a Gymnasium in Ireland. I'll venture to say, no considerable part of that success will be owing to any one, who is better able to conduct his part in it, than yourself. I admire the

plan you were so kind to send me, and the more so, as it is greatly destitute of all that shallow pedantry, generally observable in institutions of this nature. A rich vein of imagination runs through the whole. There is visibly a mind that thinks well, and a resolution bold to execute what it thinks. Superior to all mechanical rules, the Author of this plan considers things, not as they are, but as they should be. 'Tis owing to a contempt of nature and reason, that Schools and Universities are the Asylums for ignorance. Should the execution be equal to the spirit of the plan, there will be no danger that the architect will alter his model, and descend to think ill, for the common venal reason, because it is sometimes more interesting to think ill, than to think well. Honour, shame and pleasure, are three incentives for the younger part of life, which the wisest of the ancients had not courage enough to propose. Such a mixed scene of action and contemplation as is here intended, far out-does the admired Republic of Plato: since every article in the former is practical, whereas most of the maxims in the latter must ever be ideal.

You mention the book I desired Mrs. Whyte to convey to you. It is a trifle not worth your acceptance. I should have desired your acceptance of it, when I had your company, had I thought it any way deserving of it. I begin to have a very mean opinion of it; for there are many things I see in it, which I wish had been otherwise.

Mrs. Whyte's great distance from her friends, you say, has produced that uneasiness, which is often consequential to it. 'Tis a kind of fine, that nature sets upon us, for quitting those usages and customs, which are, with propriety, said to be a second nature. To part with what we have been long acquainted, is a loss, say some, superior to all requital.

Nos Patriæ fines, &c.

you

you know very well, is a complaint as old as Virgil; if not as old as the Creation. The occasion of their removal was necessity. Mrs. Whyte's has been choice. Time, experience, familiarity with the place, added to your more prevailing influence, will make all things easy to her; and she must very soon know,

. levius fit patentiâ
Quicquid corrigere est nefas.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient

And sincere

Petty-France,

Humble servant,

Westminster.

EDMUND BURTON.

Mrs. Burton joins with me in her best affections to you and Mrs. Whyte.

The great object of all Mr. Sheridan's pursuits, respecting himself, was independence; to be attained, not by prostituting his talents to the sinister views of a party, and gulling the multitude with inflammatory harangues, but by his own personal exertions in some scheme of practical utility;* the foremost of which he considered Education. To this end, December 6th, 1757, he gave a public breakfast at the Music-hall in Fishamble-street; after which he pronounced an Oration on the Institution of Youth, before a very numerous and respectable audience, previously invited for the purpose; many of the first characters in the kingdom, for rank and learning, were present; who, not only concurred with him in sentiment, but as an earnest of their determination to give his scheme energy and support, entered into an immediate subscription,

* See note on a former occasion, page 81.

subscription, amounting to near one thousand pounds sterling, to enable him to proceed; and formed themselves into a body under the name of the Hibernian Society for the Improvement of Education; a treasurer and proper officers for the better conducting the same, were also chosen, and after several meetings and consultations, a select committee out of the body at large was appointed, to consider Mr. Sheridan's proposals in the detail; which on minute investigation were unanimously approved, and reported accordingly. Thus far having accomplished his point, and proper persons, as he imagined, being fixed on to conduct the business in his absence, at the close of the season 1758, he went to England for the purpose, among others, of procuring suitable masters; but when he thought, good easy man, full surely his glories were a ripening, his ill stars were conspiring to undo him. Advantage was taken of his situation. The real or supposed prejudices subsisting against his profession were played off against him, and letters upon letters were sent him, to shew that an Actor, at the head of such a Seminary, would be an insurmountable obstacle to its success. It was a specious manoeuvre, and he voluntarily relinquished, at least for the present, the conduct of a scheme, for which he was decidedly competent, and which he had been labouring to accomplish the better part of his life. He surrendered however upon certain stipulated conditions, which conditions were never complied with, and the only favour he obtained was the liberty of nominating a substitute.

Sometime after the plan was in part carried into execution; and, on a general acceptance of the principles laid down by Mr. Sheridan, the Hibernian Academy, King-street, Oxmantown, was opened under the superintendancy of the Reverend Dr. Leland, S. F. T. C. D. Monday, January 8, 1759. Mr. Barry Yelverton, now Lord Yelverton, Chief Baron of his Majesty's

Majesty's Court of Exchequer in Ireland, was elected head classic-master, and the Reverend Mr. Williamson, who had lately opened school in Queen-street, was appointed Mr. Yelverton's co-adjutor, in the second chair. The English department was all along, from the beginning, intended for my Father; and Dr. Leland, with whom he was on a footing of particular intimacy, was very solicitous that he should undertake it; for in an institution where the advancement and perfection of the English Language was the leading principle, on the dereliction of the original founder, my Father, being perfectly possessed of his ideas and happy modes of instruction, was thought the only one competent to supply the vacancy, and discharge the duties of that important department. But being apprized, that Mr. Sheridan had relinquished his station as superintendant, and having a flourishing establishment of his own, he declined accepting the Doctor's offer. Mr. Williamson not very long after dying, and Mr. Yelverton having gone to the Temple, the Reverend John Fletcher was appointed sole Master. A year or two after he also died, and made room for his successor, the Reverend Andrew Buck. By this time the principles upon which the Seminary was instituted were in a great measure laid aside and forgotten; the subscribers did not think it necessary to renew their subscriptions; many of them indeed were never fulfilled; and it was left like any other school to take its chance. Mr. Buck was a man of learning and some experience, having had a school at Stephen's-green some years before he moved to King-street on the demise of Mr. Fletcher, and under his conduct this new establishment flourished several years with deserved reputation; at his death, the house being much out of repair, it was neglected, and the institution fell to the ground.

Had Mr. Sheridan been a man of the world, he probably would have played his cards better, and never would have
been

been supplanted. But, elated with his partial success, in stating to the society the pecuniary arrangements, particularly for the professors in their respective departments, which were liberal to a degree, and touching his expectations of emolument to himself, which were founded on a contingency of surplus after defraying every expence, he was too explicit; perhaps too sanguine. His arguments were indeed cogent, and his conclusions gained him credit and applause; but his frankness awakened jealousy, and exposed him to invidious attacks. The prospect he exhibited was a temptation to circumvent him, and among his hearers unluckily there were some, who neither wanted inclination nor ability to speculate upon his capital. That was the rock he split upon, and but for that, to a moral certainty, he might have arrived at that state of independence for which he panted; and at this day, his family, though fortunately in situations that don't want it, might have derived honour and advantage from so noble an Institution.

The three following letters are in no respect whatever connected with the general subject of the preceding pages; but, for their intrinsic merit, were thought worthy of preserving. They are the only remains of a lady sometime deceased, addressed to her preceptor by the amiable writer, in her seventeenth year. Her beauty and personal accomplishments rendered her a conspicuous ornament in the circles of the young and gay; and, for the due exercise of every domestic virtue, in private life, she was, by all who had the happiness of her acquaintance, esteemed a pattern of excellence. She was married at a very early age, wealthily, perhaps not happily; yet in the midst of opulence and temptation, she was never influenced by fashion or caprice to the neglect of any

any religious or moral obligation. Having laudably discharged every duty of an affectionate and tender mother to two lovely infants, in giving life to a third she forfeited her own. She was an only child; her disconsolate parents with her lost every comfort and did not long survive. These unstudied essays of her juvenile pen will give the reader a faint idea of what she might have been, had it pleased Heaven to spare her.

TO MR. WHYTE, GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.

MINIKIN COTTAGE, SEPT. 28, 1771.

NEVER did I more sincerely wish to see Mr. Whyte than at this minute, your letter has so pleased and perplexed me, that really I am at a loss to answer it. In the first place, your apologies are useless; be assured, after the many great obligations I have received from you, it would be a very hard task to persuade my pride I was forgot; that useful passion had already suggested every thing you obligingly ascribe to my good sense and good nature. I remember you once told me I should by no means indulge pride; but I know you will allow it to be very inpolitick as well as ungenerous to cast off an old friend, and such I have often found pride; but never more useful than at present, as it has saved me from so severe a mortification, as believing myself neglected by you. By the dislike you have heard me express to writing letters, I only meant the generality of correspondents to whom one scribbles accounts of marriages, divorces, and deaths, interspersed with unmerited panygericks, scandalous anecdotes, and moral reflections; but as I think it unnecessary to say I do not hold you in that class, I shall only assure you, I will be very punctual in answering every letter you favour me with. Your wisdom used to appear supernatural to me, and I could almost think so still, for I had more than half resolved to try if I could prevail on you to continue to me the pleasure of hearing

hearing from you, without expecting a return; but I felt so much reluctance at losing the pleasure of writing to you, that your disapprobation only was wanting to determine me against it.

Your putting your letter on the footing of a first visit accounts to me for the number of fine compliments it contains; but give me leave to ask, why you are so *very* much afraid I should think you flatter? I cannot express my gratitude for your kind promise of criticism and advice; but I hope to convince you of it by my attention to both, which you are perfectly right in supposing to be ever acceptable. Although your letter has much delighted me, I own it has not satisfied me; for I wished to know many particulars of your journey and voyage which I must wait for till your next; for notwithstanding your question, you have only writ sufficient to make me regret there is no more.

I am come down stairs to my mother for an answer to your flourish of thanks; she says she has received many very great obligations from Mr. Whyte; but never had it in her power to confer one; I now repent I asked her: I don't like such brilliant things from one's mother, there may be ugly comparisons drawn; but I am resolved never to blot any thing I think you can possibly make sense of, as I am sure of a candid allowance for all my faults; however, to avoid mama's wit disgracing mine, I give you notice, that for the future I will not deliver any compliments you shall send me, and also that you are to suppose at the bottom of all my letters, the family join, &c.—In return, whenever I hear from you I will say some very smart thing for you (if I don't forget) in which I will try not to disgrace your invention.

I did not receive your favour till Thursday, when I was dressing for Woolwich assembly; I had some thoughts of returning

returning your visit in full dress; but my head was that day so full of what was to happen, and the next day of what had happened, that I thought it was much better to let my ideas subside a little, (which you know they soon do.) This I mention to account to you for a delay of three days in acknowledging the high obligation I am under to you for this last proof of your attention to me.

My uncle K * * * is at Tunbridge, and I know you will be glad to hear he is much better. I think I have obeyed you now fully, as you will soon have my answer, and it is of a very reasonable extent; so I will detain you no longer than to assure you once more, that your letters will ever be most welcome to,

Dear Sir,

Your grateful and

Affectionate Pupil,

M.-A. K * * *.

To MR. WHYTE.

CHARLTON, AUGUST 6, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter, though by date it should have come much sooner, was not received until yesterday, when a gentleman left that and a book; but neither his name nor address.

You cannot imagine my surprise on finding you had complied with the request in my last; for I assure you, upon my word of honour, I never received any thing from you since your letter of November the 9th, and I can answer for Miss Cooper, whom I had the pleasure of seeing several times last winter, and never without mutual enquiries about Mr. Whyte. She feared you were ill, and often said she would write; but I thought you had not time to spare for

T

your

your trifling correspondent; so left you to your leisure, resolving to be thankful for the few favours you would vouchsafe me, and to wait with patience for them. I am greatly mortified by thinking how much pleasure I have lost by the negligence of that wicked Mr. Johnson; not only in reading the valuable writings he has detained, but in the suspension of a correspondence I so highly esteemed. The only excuse he can make is, that he was sensible of the value of what you committed to his care, and suffered self-love to get the better of probity; however, I will search after him, for which purpose I wish you had given me a more explicit direction. I do not wonder at the anger so visible in your letter, nor does it give me much pain, as I know this will remove it; for which I am so impatient, that in spite of curiosity, and a violent tooth-ach, I have sat down to write without even reading in the book, you so condescendingly sent me, 'till I discharge my conscience by writing. So I will not thank you before I know for what.

Miss Cooper (whom I shall write to as soon as I conclude this) spent the winter in London; but had not the pleasure she proposed herself there, as Mrs. Hamilton was in great distress most of the time for poor Miss Hamilton, whose life was despaired of, for a long time, as she had a dangerous fever, and recovered very slowly, while her Father was in Ireland; but I have the pleasure of informing you she is much better, and going to Bristol for the restoration of her health, which I sincerely hope will have the desired effect.

Miss K * * * k, an intimate friend of Miss Cooper's, whom you might have seen with her at Bromley, had a violent fever about the same time, which settled in her brain; she lived for some months in the most deplorable state of madness, so that her death was considered as a blessing by her friends.

Miss Cooper is returned to her lodgings at Bromley.

I did

I did not expect that the next letter I wrote you, would contain apologies for myself; for on the contrary, I intended it to be in the true spirit of haughtiness, as I did not think you could plead an excuse sufficient for your breach of promise, in not coming at Christmas; however I have it under your own hand, that you will come now, therefore shall keep all my reproaches 'till I see you, and if you write to me immediately that I am forgiven my unintentional offence, and come very soon, perhaps I shall shew my wonderful placable disposition, and graciously remit your fault; but if you do not bring your apology in person—take the consequence.

I should have told you long before, that my Father and Mother are very glad to hear from you now, and were very sorry not to hear sooner; that they hope to see you this summer, but fear they shall not, well knowing you are a gentleman very liable to accidents, and disappointing your friends, as already mentioned, &c. &c. But I have said so much about my own joy and sorrow that I will not repeat theirs; but must beg you will write to me as soon as convenient after the receipt of this, as you know you are in my debt for the rest of your journey from England, your last account ending at your arrival at Conway.

My Mother desires me to tell you she hopes to see you before you get this, so I will not detain you longer than to remind you, that your presence will give real pleasure to us all; but particularly to

Your grateful and

Impatient pupil,

M.-A. K * * *.

P. S. Dr. Hawkefworth's petulance and your cool and gentlemanlike manner of taking him down, is much talked of at Bromley; and I can truly assure you, that, even at his own door, the tide of approbation runs strongly in your favour.

To

TO MR. WHYTE, GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.

LONDON, DEC. 7, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

ON communicating your welcome letter (which arrived this day) to my Father, he desired I would write immediately to suspend your intentions of sending over the books, as he apprehends they will be liable to a very high duty if imported either bound or sewed; however, he will inform himself particularly, and write to you in a few days. The multiplicity of daily publications here has, I suppose, prevented my seeing any extracts from your works, especially as we don't take the paper which contains the poem you mention; but I will endeavour to find it out. I make no doubt of the book succeeding to your wishes; there are numerous pieces in it whose beauty must strike every reader, though there are some which will be best relished by those who know the persons or circumstances they allude to.

I shall not say we were disappointed at your not mentioning any intention of not visiting us this Christmas—we are now so accustomed to expect you by your own promise, that I suppose it is to be a favour, that you now plainly shew us you don't intend to come; 'tis very well, Sir; but I have hopes that you may be obliged to come yet, painful as the journey seems to be to you; for you must allow, that if you were on the spot you could transact this business better yourself, than any other can for you; besides, I don't think my Father understands it, and, in short, for every reason I would advise you to come in person, though I have no expectations that you will: a thought strikes me that you may intend it; but out of pure contradiction you have concealed it; if so, that is really very cruel, and I am sadly mortified with it, by the sight of so much blank paper at the end of your letter; indeed I never intended any such hint as you seem to think about

about the length of your favours, and I promise you I would much rather fill my paper, be it ever so large, than receive such another tantalizing epistle as your last: I am vexed as often as I look on it, and reflect what a number of ingenious sentences might have shined on that space much to my pleasure and advantage, or how far you might have continued your journal, which I now despair of ever seeing concluded. I beg you will not revenge yourself again without knowing you have cause to be offended; for I am sure you will not look upon any thing unintentional as such, and I assure you it was my humility (which I now most heartily repent of) that caused that unfortunate paragraph. There is but one part of your letter I like; I don't ask pardon for saying so, both because I have leave to criticise upon your writings, and because I am now afraid to apologize for any thing, as you know people who have severely suffered for one fault, are too apt to run into the opposite extreme: that one part is where you give me an opportunity of obliging you, which will be ever most acceptable to me; but the rest of the letter contains only insisting upon the confirmation of a promise I was always unwilling to make, scolding, flattering, and threatening me for endeavouring to escape it, and intreaties to make your presence here useless to yourself; I must tell you I don't like such letters, which is an expression I thought it would have been impossible for me to have used to you; but I am so provoked at the delicate malice of your last page, that I am resolved to be saucy in order to try if that will produce an answer that may compensate by its length and speed, for my disappointment in the last.

In spite of my anger I can't help telling you, that if any thing else should occur to you wherein we can serve you, we shall with great pleasure execute your orders; but we shall be yet more pleased if you will come yourself and settle the
 matter

matter in person. I hope neither "unavoidable necessity," nor Lord Louth, will detain you this vacation from paying that visit to London which has been so long expected by your friends here; but by none more impatiently than,

Dear Sir,

Your most grateful Pupil,

M.-A. K * * *.

THIS little Miscellaneous Production is now brought to a final period. The following letter, concise and simple as it is (together with the answer) is inserted as one proof at least, that ancient virtue is not wholly banished the earth; and by the few who have minds yet tuned to the consolations of Friendship, it will not be deemed an unsuitable conclusion. It affords a sketch of disinterested attachment, that commenced between the parties at school, and, though early called off by very different pursuits, and scarcely ever three months together resident in the same kingdom, is of upwards of half a century's duration.* A rare example in any age, and hardly to have been expected in critical times like the present! †

Amicus certus cernitur in incerta re.

Such

* Mr. Vickers, the writer of the letter, was many years an officer in the army, and did the State some service. He had a brother also at the same school, Lewis Vickers, who had afterwards a command in the navy, and to the infinite regret of all who knew him, lost his life in the excess of his ardour against a superior force.

† The desperate state of insecurity, which, at the period alluded to, prevailed in Ireland, is sufficiently notorious. The accounts of a traitorous combination formed in that kingdom, "the most dangerous and singular which is to be found in the annals of the civilized world,"(1) had been carried over and spread throughout Wales. Numbers of families, infirm old men, women and children, of consideration and opulence at home, had fled thither from the horrors of unbridled robbery and assassination,

which

(1) *Ld. Chancellor's speech in answer to Ld. Moira, Mond. Feb. 19, 1798.*

Such an incident in the boasted ages of antiquity, under Greek or Roman names, could not fail of celebrity. Poets would have adorned it in lofty and heroic song; Moralists would have descanted upon it in their treatises; and Critics and Commentators would have blazoned it forth in glowing and permanent colours: but, a truce to pedantry; with your leave, courteous Reader! the letter shall be its own interpreter.

TO SAMUEL WHYTE, ESQ. GRAFTON-STREET, DUBLIN.

HOLYHEAD, THE 29TH MAY, 1798.

DEAR MR. WHYTE,

DUBLIN seems to be in a very unpleasant state; you and your old friend are at a time of life, that retirement is most agreeable to them both; come over to me; take your chance with a bachelor, where you will have a warm bed and a hearty welcome. I beg my best compliments to your Son and Daughter: I am,

My dear Mr. WHYTE,

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM VICKERS.

To

which pervaded most parts of that distracted country, and raged at the very doors of the capital; and many of those unhappy fugitives are at this day, [July the 20th, 1798] wandering about dependent on the casual bounty of the hospitable natives of that ancient and renowned principality. The communication between the two shores is in all cases open and convenient; they had the printed documents of whatever was in agitation, confirmed by numerous living testimony, in their hands. They had heard that a horde of midnight conspirators had dispersed themselves through every quarter of the metropolis, for the purpose of its destruction: the taking of their Chief, a man of high pedigree, Saturday May the 19th, though it gave them a momentary check, in fact accelerated their design; and the night of the 23d was fixed on for a general rising, to burn the city, and without distinction of age or sex, to massacre the peaceable inhabitants of every description; and so imminent was the crisis of their fate, that, if but a single hour more had elapsed without prevention, the blow would have been struck. It was also universally known in Wales, that Dublin was proclaimed in a state of insurrection, and subject to martial law; and that the bloody ensigns of rebellion, with all its savage concomitants, braved defiance to the laws in open day, displaying scenes of treachery and devastation thro' the country from one end to the other; under these impressions, Mr. Vickers' friendly invitation was dispatched.

TO WILLIAM VICKERS, Esq. HOLYHEAD.

DUBLIN, JUNE 6TH, 1798.

MY VERY DEAR AND VALUABLE OLD FRIEND,

I HAVE received your very kind and welcome letter, and estimate your good intention and friendly invitation at this perilous juncture, as I ought. I do most sincerely assure you, nothing that has happened these many years, has more thoroughly gratified the feelings of my heart; and I have only to regret, that at present I cannot avail myself of your kindness. The Almighty Disposer of Events, who has hitherto been my Protector, has appointed me a station to maintain, and I must not desert my post. I have a Son and Daughter and three infant Grand-children, whose Protector under God I still am, and to whom my presence is necessary, and cannot reconcile it to myself to abandon them in these troublesome times; troublesome indeed they truly are. Hereafter I may take advantage of your kindness. Wales is a delightful, a happy country, to which you know I have long looked forwards as an asylum in the evening of life, from anxiety and fatigue, of which my portion has not been a small one; and I really think there are few living who could more cordially guard the fire-side, and smoke a comfortable pipe together, than your old friend and you. I am no politician, and therefore, at present, can entertain you with little in that way; things however, I imagine, are not growing worse; rather, I would persuade myself, taking a turn for the better; though really bad enough. In hopes, therefore, of their coming about, I close my letter, wishing you every happiness, with this assurance, that I am

My worthy Friend,

Grafton-street, No. 75.

Most sincerely yours,

SAMUEL WHYTE.



THE Origin of the Story of the HERMIT AND THE ANGEL was a subject of much enquiry in the days of Addison, Pope and Swift; and the late publication of it in the Third Edition of WHYTE'S POEMS, from that obsolete folio of Wynkyn de Worde's, has been a new spur to the curiosity of the Literati: happy had it been for the Present Times, if Speculations equally harmless could have contented them. The old fashioned dress in which we have restored it to the Public, though evidently the same in which it was originally introduced to the English Reader, appears to be a translation; it is said, from the French. The French copy we have not seen; nor perhaps any one else, in this, or the preceding century; but by persevering research, the story has been traced to one of the rarest in the catalogues of rare books, the GESTA ROMANORUM; which, after long and almost hopeless enquiry, was discovered in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. CC. 23, 15. It is termed an octavo, probably a pot octavo, being precisely five inches four-tenths, by three inches eight-tenths. Two-third of the title, from top to bottom, is irregularly torn away, and, being of a quaint device, cannot be made out: The imprint is wanting; but, by the imperfect remains, it seems to have been edited somewhere in France. It is close set in a small Gothic type, and almost in every line we meet with words strangely contracted; for instance, *Hois* for *Hominis*; *mie*, *misericordie*; *Oi*, *Omni*, &c. The folia or leaves, not paged; but numbered, as customary with our earliest typographers, making in all 172, containing 181 capitula or chapters, with a colophon annexed, as follows, viz.

Ex Gestis Romanorum cum pluribus applicatis Hystoriis de Virtutibus ac Vitiis mistice ad intellectus transumptis recollectorii. Finis, Experi. Anno, nostre salutis MCCCCVIII.

For an Account of this extraordinary Book, see Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, vol. iv. and Warton's English Poetry, vol. iii.

From the Edition of 1508, we now give the archetype, to which our old Black Letter Friends, Dr. Henry More and their several successors, are indebted.

HERMITA,

Ex Gestis Romanorum, Ca. lxxx. fo. lxxv.

DE VERSUTIA DIABOLI ET QUOD JUDICIA DEI SUNT OCCULTA.

ERAT quidam Heremita qui cum in speluncâ quâdam jacebat et diebus ac noctibus devotè Deo serviebat. Juxta cellam suam erat quidam pastor ovium qui pascebat oves. Accidit uno die quod pastor erat somno oppressus, ipso dormiente quidam latro venit et omnes oves secum abstulit. Superveniens Dominus ovium a pastore querit ubi erant oves. Ille vero incepit jurare quod oves perdidit, sed quod penitus ignorabat. Dominus hoc audiens furore repletus ipsum occidit. Heremita hoc videns ait in corde suo, O Deus! ecce homo iste culpam innocenti dedit et ipsum occidit. Ex quo ergo permittis talia fieri propter hoc ad mundum vadamus sicut cæteri vitam ducam. His cogitatis ille Heremitarium dimisit et ad mundum perrexit: sed Deus ipsum perdere nolebat. Angelum, in formâ Hominis, ad eum misit ut se ei associaret. Quem cum Angelus in via euntem invenisset; ait ei. Charissime! quo vadis? Ad ille; Ad istam civitatem ante me. Angelus dixit ei. Ego in via ero comes tuus quod Angelus Dei sum et ad te veni ut simus focii in hac via. Ambo ambulabant adversus civitatem. Cum autem intraissent hospitium a quodam milite propter Dei amorem petebant. Miles vero satis gratanter eos recepit et honorificè, ac splendide cumque bonâ devotione in omnibus ministravit. Miles iste tum unicum filium habebat in cunabulis jacentem quem multum diligebat. Cœnâ factâ Camera est aperta et lecti satis honorificè ornati pro Angelo et Heremitâ. Mediâ vero nocte surrexit Angelus et puerum in cunabulis strangu-
lavit. Hoc videns Heremita intra se cogitavit. Nunquid iste erat Angelus Dei? Bonus miles omnia necessaria propter Dei amorum ei dedit et non habuit nisi unicum filium innocentem et iste eum occidit; sed tamen non audèbat ei quicquam dicere. Manè ambo surrexerunt et ad civitatem aliam perrexerunt
in

THE PARABLE OF THE
EREMITE AND THE ANGEL,

ACCORDING TO DR. HENRY MORE.

DIALOGUE II. CHAP. XXIV.

A CERTAIN *Eremite* having conceived great jealousies touching the due administration of Divine Providence in external occurrences in the world, in this anxiety of mind was resolved to leave his cell, and travel abroad, to see with his own eyes how things went abroad in the world. He had not gone half a day's journey, but a young man overtook him and joyn'd company with him, and insinuated himself so far into the *Eremite's* affection, that he thought himself very happy in that he had got so agreeable a companion. Wherefore resolving to take their fortunes together, they always lodged in the same house. Some few days travels had over-past before the *Eremite* took notice of any thing remarkable. But at last he observed that his Fellow-traveller, with whom he had contracted so intimate a friendship, in an house where they were extraordinary well treated, stole away a gilt cup from the gentleman of the house, and carried it away with him. The *Eremite* was very much astonished with what he saw done by so fair and agreeable a person as he conceived him to be, but thought not yet fit to speak to him or seem to take notice of it. And therefore they travel fairly on together as aforesaid, till night forced them to seek lodging. But they light upon such an house as had a very unhospitable owner, who shut them out into the outward court, and exposed them all night to the injury of the open weather, which chanced then to be very rainy; but the *Eremite's* fellow-traveller unexpectedly compensated his host's ill entertainment with no meaner a reward than the gilt cup he had carried away from the former place, thrusting

in qua in domo unius civis fatis honorificè fuerunt recepti et splendidè ministrati. Civis iste quendam aureum cyphum quem miro modo dilexit, habuit in quo ultra modum gloriabatur. Media nocte surrexit Angelus et furatus est cyphum illum. Heremita hoc videns intra se cogitabat; iste malus Angelus est ut credo. Iste civis nobis optime fecit et iste furatus est cyphum suum. tamen nihil ei loquebatur quia timuit eum. Mane vero surrexerunt et per viam ambulabant, donec ad quandam aquam pervenerunt ultra quam erat pons: pontem ascenderunt et quidam pauper iis obviabat. Ait Angelus, charissime! monstra nobis viam versus talem civitatem. Pauper vertit se et cum digito viam versus civitatem ostendit. Cum vero vertisset se Angelus subito per scapulas eum accepit et ultra pontem projecit, et submersus est pauper. Quod cum Heremita vidisset, ait in corde suo, scio jam quod iste diabolus est et non Angelus Dei bonus. Quid mali fecit pauper iste? et tamen eum occidit. Ab illo tempore cogitabat ab eo discedere; verum timens nihil loquebatur ei. Cum vero circa horam vespertinam ad civitatem pervenissent ad domum cuiusdam divitis acceperunt et hospitium pro Dei amore petebant; ille vero simpliciter eis negavit, ait Angelus Dei. Amore Dei saltem tectum domus nobis concedatis ne lupi aut malæ bestię hic nos devorent. Ille ait; Ecce domus ubi porci mei jacent; si placet vobis cum eis jacere potestis; sin autem recedatis quod alium locum vobis non dabo. Ait ei Angelus; si aliud non potest fieri, cum porcis vestris jacebimus et sic factum est. Mane vero surrexerunt, Angelus hospitem vocavit et ait, Charissime! do tibi cyphum istum, et dedit ei cyphum quem furatus fuerat ab illo cive. Heremita hoc videns, ait intra se. Jam sum expertus quod iste est diabolus. Bonus homo erat qui cum omni devotione nos recepit et furatus est ei cyphum et dedit isti pessimo, qui negavit nobis hospitium. Ait Angelo. Nolo vobiscum amplius expectare ad Deum vos recomendo. Angelus dixit ei: Audite me et tunc recedito.

thrusting it in at the window when they departed. This the Eremite thought was very pretty, and that it was not covetousness, but humour, that made him take it away from its first owner. The next night, where they lodged, they were treated again with a deal of kindness and civility: but the Eremite observed with horror that his fellow-traveller for an ill requital strangled privately a young child of their so courteous host in the cradle. This perplexed the mind of the poor Eremite very much; but in sadness and patience forbearing to speak, he travelled another day's journey with the young man, and at evening took up in a place where they were more made of than any-where hitherto. And because the way they had to travel next morning was not so easie to find, the master of the house commanded one of the servants to go part of the way to direct them; whom, while they were passing over a stone-bridge, the Eremite's fellow-traveller caught suddenly betwixt the legs and pitched him head-long from off the bridge into the river, and drowned him. Here the Eremite could have no longer patience, but flew bitterly upon his fellow-traveller for those barbarous actions, and renounced all friendship with him, and would travel with him no longer nor keep him company. Whereupon the young man smiling at the honest zeal of the Eremite, and putting off his mortal disguise, appeared as he was, in the form and lustre of an angel of God, and told him he was sent to ease his mind of the great anxiety it was incumbered with touching the DIVINE PROVIDENCE. In which, said he, nothing can occur more perplexing and paradoxical than what you have been offended at since we two travelled together. But yet I will demonstrate to you, said he, that all that I have done is very just and right. For as for that first man from whom I took the gilded cup, it was a real compensation

EXPOSITIO.

Certissime quando eras in Heremitario, dominus ovium pastorem injuste occidit. Scias quod pastor ille pro tunc mortem non meruit; sed alias commisit quare mori non deberet. tunc temporis inventus est sine peccato, Deus ergo permisit eum occidi ut pœnam post mortem evaderet, propter peccatum quod alias committeret pro quo nunquam penitentiâ fecerat. Latro vero quod evasit, cum omnibus ovibus pœnam eternam sustinet, et dominus ovium quod pastorem occidit vitam suam emendabit per largas eleemosynas et opera misericordiæ quam ignoranter fecit. Demum filius istius militis de nocte strangulavi quod nobis bonum hospitium dedit: Scias quod antequam puer ille natus erat miles optimus eleemosynarius erat, et multa opera misericordiæ fecit. Sed postquam natus est puer factus est parcus cupidus et omnia colligit ut puerum divitem faciat sic quod erit causa perditionis ejus et ideo puerum occidi, et jam sicut prius factus est bonus Christianus. Deinde Cyphum illius civis qui nos cum devotione recepit furatus fuit. Scias tu quod antequam Cyphus ille erat fabricatus non erat sobrior eo in tota terra; sed tantum de Cypho gaudebat post fabricationem quod omni die tantum de eo bibebat quod bis aut ter omni die fuit inebriatus, et ideo cyphum abstuli et factus est sobrius sicut prius. Deinde pauperem in aquam projeci. Scias quod pauper iste bonus Christianus fuit; sed si ad dimidium miliare ambulasset alium in peccato mortale occidisset: scias jam est salvatus et regnat in cœlesti gloria. Deinde cyphum illius civis dedi illi quod nobis bonum hospitium negavit. Scias quod nihil in terra sit sine causa. Ipse nobis concessit donum porcorum et ideo cyphum ei dedi et regnabit post vitam in inferno. Pone ergo omni modo custodiam ori tuo ut Deo non detrahas. Ipse enim omnia novit. Heremita hoc audiens cecidit ad pedes Angeli, et veniam petiit ad Heremitarium perrexit et factus est bonus Christianus.

penfation indeed of his hofpitality; that cup being fo forcible an occafion of the good man's diftempering himfelf, and of hazarding his health and life, which would be a great lofs to his poor neighbours, he being of fo good and charitable a nature. But I put it into the window of that harfh and unhofpitable man that ufed us fo ill, not as a booty to him, but as a plague and fcurge to him, and for an eafe to his oppreffed neighbours, that he may fall into intemperance, difeafes, and death itfelf. For I knew very well that there was that enchantment in this cup, that they that had it would be thus bewitched with it. And as for that civil perfon whose child I ftrangled in the cradle, it was in great mercy to him, and no real hurt to the child, who is now with God. But if that child had lived, whereas this gentleman had been piously, charitably and devoutly given, his mind, I faw, would have unavoidably funk into the love of the world, out of love to his child, he having had none before, and doting fo hugely on it; and therefore I took away this momentary life from the body of the child, that the foul of the father might live for ever. And for this laft fact, which you fo much abhor, it was the moft faithful piece of gratitude I could do to one that had ufed us fo humanely and kindly as that gentleman did. For this man, who by the appointment of his mafter was fo officious to us as to fhew us the way, intended this very night enfuing to let in a company of rogues into his mafter's houfe, to rob him of all that he had, if not to murder him and his family. And having faid thus, he vanifhed. But the poor Eremite, tranfported with joy and amazement, lift up his hands and eyes to heaven, and gave glory to God, who had thus unexpectedly delivered him from any farther anxiety touching the ways of his Providence; and thus returned with chearfulnefs to his forfaken cell, and fpent the refidue of his days there in piety and peace.

Notwithftanding

Notwithstanding the extreme scarcity of the *Gesta Romanorum*, this singular book has gone thro' various impressions.

Two copies of it were found in the numerous and splendid collection of the late Reverend and learned Thomas Crofts. See *Bibliotheca Croftsiana*, London, 1783, pp. 67, 126.

1300 *Ex Gestis Romanor. historie notabiles*, folio, nitidiss. in cor. turc. EDIT. PRIMA. . . . *Sine Loco aut Nom. Impressoris.*

2487 *Ex Gestis Romanorum Historie notabiles collecte*; de Viciis Virtutibusq. tractantes; cum Applicationibus moralisatis et mysticis. *Literis Gothicis*, 8vo. perg. Venet. per Alex de Bindonis mcccccx.

We have also met with accounts of other Editions, viz. *Gesta Romanorum*, &c. *finis Anno nostre salutis mccccxxxix*. Fo. *Gesta Romanorum*, &c. *Goud. per Gerardum Leeu mccccxc*. Fo.

Tyrwhitt in his account of "this strange book" makes mention of several editions; the first containing but 152 chapters, which were afterwards increased to 181, as in the Edition he had; printed at Rouen, 1521. It was among the earliest put to press; and, concluding from circumstances, he thinks "one of our countrymen was the Author." Chaucer owes many obligations to the *Gesta Romanorum*, and no less Gower, Lydgate, Occleve, and others, who manifestly borrowed many of their stories from it. There can be no doubt that it was of great use in compiling *the Floure of the Commaundements*; another book no less strange and uncommon. Dr. Farmer mentions also an old translation of the *Gesta Romanorum*, in English, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, where he found the story of the Caskets, &c. in the Merchant of Venice; a great variety of other incidents adopted by Shakspeare are likewise derived from the same source.

Dr. Henry More's Dialogues on the Attributes of God and his Providence, five in Number, from the 2d of which, the foregoing narrative of the Hermit in English is taken, were published under the name of Franciscus Palæopolitanus, An. 1668; an imperfect set of which is to be seen in Bishop Marsh's Library, St. Patrick's, Dublin.

It

It requires no extraordinary share of black letter information to discover, that our elder bards of the reformed type are not altogether so much beholden to the Greeks and Romans as has been fondly imagined. However they may have formed their plans or improved their diction on the classic models, their pages are highly illuminated with the treasures of Gothic lore; and the romances and legendary narratives of the olden times, have proved to them plentiful sources of interesting and sublime conceptions.* Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* suggested to Milton the outline, and many of the most favourite images of his *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*; even the particular turn and measure of the verse he adopted from Burton; as Wharton has also remarked in his valuable edition of that great poet's juvenile productions. The *Anatomy of Melancholy*, though so little known to the generality of readers, is still a copious store-house of useful discoveries, information, and amusement to modern wits; for proof we need go no farther than Sterne. There is another obsolete folio, to which we may trace many striking sublimities of Milton; to mention but one; the poetical depth and immensity of the *Infernal Regions*, which the critics will have, a flight of competitorship with Homer and Virgil. This book has for its title, *The Polychronicon* . . . It was the work of Ranulph Higden, Monk of Bury, translated at the request of Lord Barclay. The first edition imprinted by Wynkyn de Worde, mccccxciii: The second, by Peter Treveris, mcccccxv, and the third, (a fair copy of which is preserved in Marsh's Library, St. Patrick's, Dublin) by the same Peter Treveris, imprinted at Southwerke, in the year of

X

our

* It may be proper to notice, though not strictly in its place, that, in the Catalogue of the College Library, the Book from which the HERMIT is taken, appears under the title of "*Recolletorium ex Gestis Romanorum de Vitiis et Virtutibus*, 8vo. Francof. 1508." . . . Ad ille, ad istam civitatem . . . in domo unus civis . . . quidam Pauper eis obviabat, &c. are the original reading.

our Lord God mcccc & xxvii, the xvi daye of Maye. Even Machiavel has been laid under contributions, and History degraded into a vehicle of fiction ; which, favourably speaking, is but a pitiful application of talents, and a palpable encroachment on the province of poetry.

The learned and judicious Zimmerman, who was himself a native of Swisserland, gives up the story of WILLIAM TELL, of which in his excellent Essay on Solitude, we find the following relation :

“ WILLIAM TELL was one of the principal authors of the revolution in Swisserland in the year 1307. GRISLER, who governed that country under the Emperor Albert, obliged him, on pain of death, to shoot from a considerable distance, with an arrow at an apple which was placed on the head of his infant son, and, it is said, that he had the good fortune to carry away the apple without doing the smallest injury to the child. The governor, on approaching to congratulate him on his dexterous achievement, perceived another arrow concealed under the garments of the successful archer ; and on inquiring of him for what use he intended it, “ I brought it,” replied TELL, “ for the purpose of revenge ; its eager point “ should have drank the blood of thy heart, inhuman Tyrant, “ if I had the misfortune to kill my son.” The story of the apple, however, which had before been told of a Goth soldier named TOCHO, is justly suspected by the later historians. The Swifs were willing to adorn the birthday of their liberty by the fable of some surprising event. But it is certain that TELL, after having suffered a long and rigorous confinement, killed the governor with an arrow, and gave by that means a signal to the conspirators.

In one of our old English ballads, as before hinted, the same or a similar achievement, abstracted from political consequences, is attributed to WYLLYAM of CLOUDESLE, a celebrated

celebrated archer of our own country; a country then and at all times remarkable for superior skill and dexterity in the use of the bow, which even at this day is a favourite exercise. Our ancient minstrels abound with stories of such extraordinary feats; and whoever is acquainted with legendary writ will have no difficulty in believing, that the splitting of a hazel rod at four hundred yards distance, and striking an apple off a child's head at six score, are perfectly in the style and taste of the times, and were but two arrows from the same quiver.

The superb Edition of the Works of HORATIO WALPOLE, Earl of Orford, in Five Volumes Royal Quarto, by the ROBINSONS, &c. London, this present year, (1798,) does honour to the spirit and industry of the publishers. In the 1st vol. appears the Tragedy of the Mysterious Mother, the offspring of that nobleman's pen, though not before publicly avowed, succeeded by a Postscript of considerable length, from which the following story of the Tragedy is extracted and given in the Author's own words, pp. 125, 6, which, contrasted with the subsequent accounts, taken from publications of more rare and difficult access, will doubtless afford a gratification to curiosity, and proportionally contribute to the pleasure of the perusal:

“ I had heard, when very young, that a gentlewoman, under uncommon agonies of mind, had waited on Archbishop TILLOTSON, and besought his counsel. A damsel that had served her, had, many years before, acquainted her that she was importuned by the gentlewoman's son to grant him a private meeting. The Mother ordered the maiden to make the assignation, when she said she would discover herself, and reprimand him for his criminal passion; but, being hurried away by a much more criminal passion herself, she kept the assignation without discovering herself. The fruit of this
horrid

horrid artifice was a daughter, whom the gentlewoman caused to be educated very privately in the country; but proving very lovely, and being accidentally met by her Father-brother, who never had the slightest suspicion of the truth, he had fallen in love with, and actually married her. The wretched guilty Mother learning what had happened, and distracted with the consequence of her crime, had now resorted to the Archbishop to know in what manner she should act. The prelate charged her never to let her son and daughter know what had passed, as they were innocent of any criminal intention. For herself, he bade her almost despair!

“Sometime after I had finished the play on this groundwork, a gentleman to whom I had communicated it, accidentally discovered the origin of the tradition in the novels of the Queen of Navarre, Vol. II. Novel 30; and to my surprise I found a strange concurrence of circumstances between the story as there related, and as I had adapted it to my piece: for, though I believed it to have happened in the reign of King William, I had, for a purpose to be mentioned hereafter, thrown it back to the eve of the Reformation; and the Queen, it appears, dates the event in the reign of Louis XI. I had chosen Narbonne for the scene,—the Queen places it in Languedoc. The rencontres are of little importance, and, perhaps, curious to nobody but the author.

“In order to make use of a canvas so shocking, it was necessary as much as possible to palliate the crime, and raise the character of the criminal. To attain the former end, I imagined the moment in which she has lost a beloved husband, when grief and disappointment, and a conflict of passions might be supposed to have thrown her reason off its guard, and exposed her to the danger under which she fell. Strange as the moment may seem for vice to have seized

seized on her, still it makes her less hateful than if she had coolly meditated so foul a crime. I have also endeavoured to make her very fondness for her husband in some measure the cause of her guilt." . . . So far our Rt. Hon. Dramatist.

In the pamphlet published by GEORGE FAULKNER, which was reprinted from a London Edition of the same year, 1751, an account of which is given in the 5th volume of the Monthly Review, p. 317, it is said that the narrative was intended for publication in the year 1685, and thus the writer introduces his extraordinary Tale:

" The following little history of the transactions of a private family, I should not have undertaken to offer to the public, but from the surprisingness of the facts, and my intimacy in the family, by whom the most minute passages were, in confidence, entrusted to my secrecy, from the very beginning to the ensuing catastrophe; of which I was but too late a spectator; as also from a particular inclination I have, that mankind beholding the dreadful consequences of vice in others, may form the stronger guards against any submission to it in themselves: For the ensuing narration will, to demonstration, prove, that no one can possibly limit the process of an ill act once commenced; and that the only way to avoid bad consequences is, to afford no cause for them; for one enormity, though ever so privately committed, fails not, for the most part, to draw after it such a succession of evils as is very difficult to set bounds to." . . . The whole narrative runs to the length of forty-eight octavo pages.

The author gives the story under fictitious names, because, he says, several of the descendants of the parties are settled near the scene of action, innocent of the facts.

Eugenio, who is described in all respects a finished gentleman, endowed with every personal and mental accomplishment, he says, was the younger son of an illustrious family in the

the northern parts of SCOTLAND. He was very early initiated into the army, where, at the age of twenty-eight, he ranked as a Captain, and falling in love with a young heiress of superior beauty and fortune, he paid his addresses to her, and a marriage was in a short time concluded. But he had but just time to behold his own image in a son she brought him, when he was commanded off, and fell at the siege of the fort of St. Martin's, in the Isle of Ree. The beautiful and disconsolate widow, Eleanora, as she is called, discharged every duty of an excellent mother to her son, named Orestes, and having liberally bestowed on him every advantage of previous institution, at a proper age he was sent to the University of GLASGOW.

Towards the latter end of the first year, at a time of vacation, he returned home on a visit to his Mother, who in his absence had taken into her family a gentleman's daughter, called Arene, as her companion. The young collegian grew enamoured with her beauty, and left no means untried to seduce her, and one night found means of getting into her bed-chamber, but without effecting his purpose, as happily she had time to conceal herself. The young lady disclosed the affair to her patroness, who highly approved and commended her conduct; but supposing, for very obvious reasons, under such circumstances, her son would deny the charge, and if wholly unnoticed would probably repeat his attempt, she bethought herself of a stratagem, wholly devoid of any evil intention on her part, to detect the young spark, and cure him of his pranks. "I myself," says she, "will this night take up with your bed, while you lie secure in mine: I'll ring such a peal in the amorous spark's ears, when I have him there, as shall deter him from any similar attempt in any family, I'll warrant you."

The young gentleman taking silence for a sort of consent, was thus encouraged to pursue his design, and far from the sneaking

sneaking attack which he had made the night before, rushed, *sans ceremonie*, at once into her bed. It was a fatal moment. The Mother, confounded with the untowardness of her situation, had not power to remonstrate, and, overcome by the youthful ardour that embraced her, fell a victim to his desires.

The dreadful consequences need not be repeated, though detailed more circumstantially in the pamphlet before us, they are sufficiently made known in the preceding relation; but surely the noble author of the tragedy, had no occasion to resort to so "strange a moment," as he has chosen, contrary to the narrative, for the perpetration of the horrid act; when the other, equally as critical, would as well have served his purpose, and would have been, if we dare apply the phrase, more natural.

The beautiful daughter of this incestuous intercourse, who was afterwards married to her own Father, is in the history named Cornelia, by whom he had several children, and being a Colonel in the infantry, at the Restoration, once more encountered Arene, his Mother's former ward, at an election ball in Pontefract, by which unfortunate meeting the denouement was casually brought about, which terminated as might be expected, tragically enough.

For the reader's farther instruction and amusement we will now turn to another scarce volume,

DUCTOR DUBITANTIUM, or the Rule of Conscience, &c.

The second edition, by Jeremy Taylor, Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles the First, and late Bishop of Down and Connor, London, printed by Roger Norton, for Richard Boyston, &c. 1671, with a Dedication to the King, and a Preface, dated "From my study in Portmore, Kilultagh, October 5th, 1659." In which an extraordinary case of human frailty we find stated as follows. The scene of action, as appears by the context, in VENICE.

" 3. If

“ 3. If the error be invincible, and the consequent of the Perswasion be considered with the State of Grace, the error must be opened or not opened according to prudent considerations relating to the person and his state of affairs. So that the error must rather be suffered than a grievous scandal, or an intolerable, or a very great inconvenience. To this purpose *COMITOLUS* says it was determined by a congregation of learned and prudent persons, in answering to a strange and a rare case happening in *VENICE*; a gentleman did ignorantly lie with his Mother; she knew it but intended it not, 'till for her curiosity and in her search whether her son intended it to her maid, she was surpris'd and gotten with child: She perceiving her shame and sorrow hasten, sent her son to travel for many years; and he returned not till his Mother's female birth was grown to be a handsome pretty maiden. At his return he espies a sweet fac'd girl in the house, likes her, loves her, and intends to marry her. His Mother conjured him by all that was sacred and prophane that he should not, saying, she was a beggar's child, whom for pitie's sake she rescued from the street, and beggary, and that he should not by dishonouring his family, make her die with sorrow. The gentleman's affections were strong, and not to be mastered, and he married his own sister and daughter. But now the bitings of his Mother's conscience were intolerable, and to her confessor she discovered the whole business within a year or two after this prodigious marriage, and asked whether she was bound to reveal the case to her son and daughter, who now lived in love and sweetness of society innocently, though with secret misfortune which they felt not. It was concluded negatively; she was not to reveal it, lest she bring an intolerable misery in the place of that which to them was no sin, or at least upon notice of the error they might be tempted by their mutual endearment and

and common children, to cohabit in despite of the case, and so change that into a known sin, which before was unknown calamity; and by this state of the answer they were permitted to their innocence, and the children to their inheritance, and all under the protection of a harmless, though erring and mistaken conscience.

Book I. chap. iii. sect. iii. p. 89.

Comitolus and the Queen of Navarre are not forth coming, so for the present the particulars of their testimony must be dispensed with, and the German author, who as well as the Englishman, wot ye, speaks from his own knowlege, though formerly of our company, has absconded. The only material difference between his and the preceding account is, that the German vouches for the authenticity of his relation as of a matter of public notoriety at PRAGUE, in a family of his own particular acquaintance there. . . . Powers of Veracity! how long, by ignorance, knavery and sheer conceit, is the fond suffering world to be trifled with and imposed upon? . . . But to the eternal disgrace of the Illuminati, Philosophers, Politicians, and Reformers of the Eighteenth Century, this monstrous fabrication has been made the ground work of an atrocious calumny, meanly and industriously circulated in the common news papers, to blacken the character of the unfortunate Maria Antonietta of France! And to the scandal of common honesty and common sense, all party business out of the question, there are some flaming Virtuous Souls no doubt! . . . who affect to credit the horrid aspersions.

On our peep into Germany, casting an eye towards Prague, the name of their Poet BURGHER, and the tale of LEONORA occurred. It has been translated into English by four several hands. One of those writers, in the preface to his own version of that Popular Poem, expatiating on the peculiar

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character

character and taste of the Germans, says, "their minds vigorously conceive, and their language nobly expresses, the terrible and majestic; and it must be allowed that in this species of writing they would force from us the palm of excellence, were it not secured by the impregnable towers of OTRANTO. Of all their productions of this kind, LEONORA is perhaps the most perfect. The story in a narrow compass unites tragic event, poetical surprise, and epic regularity. The admonitions of the Mother are just, although ill-timed; the despair of the Daughter at once natural and criminal; her punishment dreadful and equitable. Few objections can be made to a subject new, simple and striking; and none to a moral, which cannot be too frequently and awfully enforced."

This is the common language of translators, in humble imitation of their great predecessor Dryden, obliquely recommending their own performances; and yet, admitting the translator spoke his real sentiments, concerning that popular and celebrated Production, his decision appears liable to many cogent exceptions. Without reference to Religious principles, considered in a moral light it will appear defective; to a philosophic eye absurd. The scope and tendency of it are of a mischievous nature. It may make the hair of the weak and credulous stand on end; the Infidel, who with rapture contemplates the wanton extravagancies of Jupiter, attends ancient cut-throats to the regions of Tartarus, and listens with avidity to the Legend of Proserpine, of which LEONORA's is a tolerable *Fac Simile*,* feels shocked at the gloomy reveries of the Cloisters, and in his fancied triumphs over ignorance and superstition,

* So Pluto seized of Proserpine, convey'd
To Hell's tremendous gloom the affrighted maid;
There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with his beauteous prize,
Nor env'y'd Jove his sunshine and his skies.

Addison's Cato, Act III. Scene 7th.

Vide Ovid. Metamorph. lib. 5. v. 391. De Proserp.

fiction, with his usual airs of self-sufficiency, will be tempted to treat the machinery of our modern with a sneer. In truth, the fiction is too violent; it out-herods Herod, and seems merely calculated to keep alive and propagate the exploded notions of ghosts and hobgoblins to the great annoyance of poor children, whose ductile minds are liable to fearful impressions, which by the strongest exertions of reason and good sense are scarcely ever afterwards to be wholly obliterated.

The argument in favour of the poem from the lesson of patience it is said to contain is by no means conclusive; for being wholly founded in imposture it necessarily loses of its effect. There are also objections to it as a composition arising from the conduct of the machinery itself. The terrible graces, to which the poem of *LEONORA* owes so much of its popularity, though bodied forth by the exquisite designs of the lady *DIANA BEAUCLERC*, in our humble apprehension, are not supported with a due degree of consistency. It is not easy to determine the precise characteristics, and prescribe limits for the conduct of Beings, with which no mortal has ever yet been personally in habits of familiarity; but according to the received ritual of Apparitions, the Ghost in question, is not only forced ungraciously into the service, but is made to assume powers to which, as a Ghost, he was utterly incompetent. If this position be tenable, we must beg leave to dissent from the authority. . . . The poem is not perfect.

The initiated in the mysteries of "that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns," of which Homer, Virgil and Shakspeare are the acknowledged Poetical High Priests, by no means admit such "fatal visions, sensible to feeling as to sight;" neither has the notion as yet prevailed among the superstitious and the vulgar. The author of *LEONORA*, by an inexcusable error, we may say, in the costume, has proceeded directly against the canon laws of their foundation,
for

for the sake, it should seem, of a moral not clearly deducible, and probably but a secondary consideration. Cause and effect should reciprocally correspond. Ghosts are serious subjects, and should not be roused from their everlasting mansions on trivial errands; to point out where a pot of money lies interred, or check the frenzy of a love-sick girl; but their imputed attributes are specifically essential and not to be dispensed with. Here the Ghost of a dead Warriour, armed cap-a-pee, in mail of the same temper, mounted on the Ghost of a dead Charger, makes a progress of five hundred German miles, and under the shape of an affianced lover, cajoles a fond credulous female, good and lawful flesh and blood, to quit her aged weeping mother and get up behind him: off he carries her, hurry-scurry, over hill, over dale, wood, waste, bog and briar, the same journey back again, all in the space of one short night, every now and then soothing and encouraging her to sit still, with an equivocal assurance, beneath the dignity of a Ghost, of accommodating her in his camp bed, six boards and a sheet, which in the upshot proves to be . . . his grave. And that is the poor creature's punishment for uttering a rash, a wicked expression if you will (exaggerated we may suppose) in the paroxysms of insanity, the effect of her fidelity and constancy; virtues which the men, though little they have to brag of, will seldom allow the sex, and surely this is a sad way of inculcating. Thus the order of nature is subverted; the secrets of the grave prophaned, and a tremendous apparatus, as if the fate of nations depended on it, exhibited, for what? To frighten an innocent young maniac, and send her a little before her time to "Heaven:" But the pious and disconsolate Mother, without crime bereft of her child, the staff of her age, is the sufferer: and the Ghost not, as we are taught to believe, a mere visionary essence; but, contrary to all known principles of orthodoxy, a firm, corporeal, tangeable

tangible substance, vested with human powers, and retaining as in life the old spirit of gallantry with the usual accompaniments, prevarication and deceit.

The frigid criticism this may be deemed of a cold and phlegmatic heart. Not so; with deference to superiour understandings, it is the unbiassed opinion of an enemy to every species of affectation, and empty sentimentalism. It is the mature result of feeling and reflection, from an attentive consideration of the subject, and a thorough conviction of the bad effects such compositions are likely to produce. As a subject of poetical invention, it may be simple and striking; simplicity and force employed to a good purpose are capital recommendations, and the charm of novelty palliates many defects; but on looking attentively nearer home, strong proofs appear that, in this case at least, powerfully impugn the claims of the author of *LEONORA*, if not to the palm of excellence, indisputably to the honour of originality: and therefore more open to animadversion.

"Godfrey Augustus Burgher, [Bürger] was born An. 1748, at Aschersleben. In 1779, was made the first collection of his poems. They consist partly of songs, sonnets, elegies, fables, and other short pieces, comic and serious; and partly of ballads, many of which are translated with improvements from *English Originals*. Simplicity is the characteristic of his compositions; and of all literary beauties simplicity must be the most generally attractive. It is no common merit to excel in a style which all understand, many admire, and but few can attain. No writer perhaps has ever attained a more decided popularity." The Poem of *LEONORA* is not given as a translation or an imitation; it is given peremptorily and without reserve as "an undoubted original, the most perfect in its kind." The writer therefore hazards his own title to taste and discernment, who ventures to dispute it; and to

contradict

contradict the assertion unauthorized and at random, would be an act of unpardonable presumption.

A Collection of Old Ballads, corrected from the best and most ancient copies extant, (the Third Edition) London, MDCCXXVII, was published by J. Roberts, Warwick-lane, &c. which is quoted more than once by Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. The volume consists of 287 pages, containing forty-four favourite pieces; and if the reader's curiosity should prompt him to get the book, he will find our authority for the following Legend, [page 266] between which and LEONORA, there seems in many particulars so striking a resemblance, that considering the author's knowledge of English compositions, though in some circumstances the German may be perhaps an improvement, we can hardly suppose it to be an original.

XXXVIII. THE SUFFOLK MIRACLE: or, a Relation of a Young Man, who a month after his death appeared to his Sweetheart, and carry'd her on horseback behind him for forty miles in two hours, and was never seen after but in his grave.

A WONDER stranger ne'er was known
Than what I now shall treat upon.
In SUFFOLK there did lately dwell,
A farmer rich, and known full well:

He had a daughter fair and bright,
On whom he placed his whole delight;
Her beauty was beyond compare,
She was both virtuous and fair.

There was a young man living by,
Who was so charmed with her eye,
That he could never be at rest,
He was by love so much possesst.

He

He made address to her, and she,
Did grant him love immediately;
But when her father came to hear,
He parted her, and her poor dear.

Forty miles distant was she sent,
Unto his brother's, with intent
That she should there so long remain,
'Till she had changed her mind again.

Hereat this young man sadly griev'd,
But knew not how to be reliev'd;
He sigh'd and sob'd continually,
That his true love he could not see.

She by no means could to him send,
Who was her heart's espoused friend;
He sigh'd, he griev'd, but all in vain,
For she confin'd must still remain.

He mourn'd so much, that doctor's art,
Could give no ease unto his heart,
Who was so strangely terrify'd,
That in short time for love he dy'd.

She that from him was sent away,
Knew nothing of his dying-day,
But constant still she did remain,
And lov'd the dead, altho' in vain.

After he had in grave been laid
A month or more, unto this maid
He came in middle of the night,
Who joy'd to see her heart's delight.

Her

Her father's horse, which well she knew,
Her mother's hood and safe-guard too,
He brought with him to testify,
Her parent's order he come by.

Which when her uncle understood,
He hop'd it would be for her good,
And gave consent to her straightway,
That with him she should come away.

When she was got her love behind,
They pass'd as swift as any wind,
That within two hours, or little more,
He brought her to her father's door.

But as they did this great haste make,
He did complain his head did ache;
Her handkerchief she then took out,
And ty'd the same his head about:

And unto him she thus did say,
Thou art as cold as any clay;
When we come home a fire we'll have;
But little dream'd he went to grave.

Soon were they at her father's door
And after she ne'er saw him more:
I'll set the horse up, then he said,
And there he left this harmless maid.

She knock'd, and strait a man he cry'd
Who's there? 'Tis I, she then reply'd;
Who wonder'd much her voice to hear,
And was possess'd with dread and fear.

Her

Her father he did tell, and then
He star'd like an affrighted man;
Down stairs he ran, and when he see her,
Cry'd out, my child, how cam'st thou here?

Pray, sir, did you not fend for me,
By such a messenger, said she;
Which made his hair stare on his head,
As knowing well that he was dead:

Where is he? then to her he said,
He's in the stable, quoth the maid;
Go in, said he, and go to bed,
I'll see the horse well littered.

He star'd about, and there could he
No shape of any mankind see;
But found his horse all on a sweat,
Which made him in a deadly fret.

His daughter he said nothing to,
Nor none else, tho' full well they knew,
That he was dead a month before,
For fear of grieving her full fore.

Her father to the father went
Of the deceas'd, with full intent
To tell him what his daughter said;
So both came back unto the maid.

They ask'd her, and she still did say,
'Twas he that then brought her away;
Which when they heard, they were amaz'd
And on each other strangely gaz'd.

A handkerchief she said she ty'd
About his head ; and that they try'd,
The sexton they did speak unto,
That he the grave would then undo :

Affrighted, then they did behold
His body turning into mould,
And though he had a month been dead,
The handkerchief was about his head.

This thing unto her then they told,
And the whole truth they did unfold ;
She was thereat so terrified
And grieved, that she quickly dyed.

Part not true love, you rich men then,
But if they be right honest men
Your daughters love, give them their way,
For force oft breeds their lives' decay.

Notwithstanding all the high encomiums lavished on LEONORA, and the gorgeous attire in which she was presented to public notice, our SUFFOLK DAMSEL is not without her share of attractions. " Thoughtless of beauty, she is beauty's self." LEONORA, a beauty at second hand, and for the very graces in which she most excels, she is manifestly indebted to her rival; heightened with an additional tinge of rouge; in the opinion of those who have a true taste for the *simplex munditiis*, perhaps not to her advantage. In the article of diction there probably is no great disparity; the seeming negligence sometimes of the one, may arise from difference of time, and our familiarity with the language in which it is written; for the opposite reason, similar blemishes in the other cannot be equally apparent. The correspondence of sound and sense, for which the German has been distinguished,

guished, is, no doubt, a prime ornament of metre, and gives life and spirit to poetic expression; but carried to an extreme, however striking the resemblance, it is the resemblance in caricature, and ceases to be beautiful. The genuine unaffected simplicity of our old English Ballad, depending not on the play of words, but on the conception, would bear translation, and appear with advantage in any language, "where free to follow nature is the mode;" this is not the case with the German. The reiteration of *trap, trap, trap* for the sound of a horse's, or rather the ghost of a horse's feet, and of *cling, cling, cling* for that of a door-bell, in Burgher's Poem, is mere mimicry, adapted to the vulgar ear, which in an English version, the translator himself confesses, would appear ridiculous. Such mimic artifice, however the English Bard, introducing a real horse, more naturally might have indulged, and yet judiciously has avoided. In the moral too, if the interposition of preternatural agency can be at all admitted, he has a manifest superiority. The Suffolk Maiden, it is true, falls a sacrifice; but it is an unblemished, heroic sacrifice to virtuous constancy: and in her loss the parents receive the due punishment of their avarice and hard-heartedness, as a warning to parents in general, not to sacrifice their children's real happiness, as is but too often the case, to venal and selfish ends. . . . Burgher, indeed, has had ample justice done him by his own countrymen, and, singing to the tune of "Over the hills and far away," has among us the recommendation of a foreigner; that was enough to gain him the palm of excellence, now embalmed for the admiration of future ages in the broad foliage of a royal quarto, and it is but justice to add, the charming pencil of a fair and noble lady, the happiest efforts of the engraver's skill, combined with the exertions of the typographer, render it a curiosity of art, and enhance its merit in the eye of the connoisseur. Our old Suffolk Minstrel "warbling his native wood notes wild,"

wild," remains nameless and unnoticed. What an encouraging contrast! 'tis a true epitome of the History and Spirit of these wonderful times: and tho' his Ghost, after a requiem of near one hundred years, again revisits the glimpses of the moon, to assert his ravished honours, no man knows, or possibly cares, on whose temples to bind the palm of originality . . . " Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!" The same subject, diversified with occasional touches from Shakspeare, has contributed to enrich the canvas of some of our latter novelists.

This preternatural expedition also seems anticipated in Scarron's comical Romance [pt. 1, ch. 24,] from which the German, as well as our English Legendist, might have taken the hint and collected materials. Destiny is the name of the French writer's hero, the lady of the piece is distinguished by the appellation of Angelica:

'Twas midnight when Destiny in pursuit of Angelica, thinking to make a short cut, struck into a little myr narrow lane. He had not advanced many paces, when the Moon, which shone forth in full splendour, shrunk suddenly under a cloud, and the thick overshadowing boughs, rustling on each side of the way, added not a little to its gloom and perplexity; his steed, having all these impediments to encounter, could by no means be prevailed on to second the ardour of his wishes. In the midst of his embarrassment, inwardly execrating his situation, suddenly, to his infinite amazement, he perceived something, like a man or a devil, leap up behind him, and clasp him about the neck. Destiny was immeasurably alarmed, and his horse so much startled, that he would certainly have thrown his rider, had not the phantom, which invested him, kept him firm in the saddle. The horse, taking fright, ran away with him; and Destiny, not knowing what he was about, continued goading him with his spurs, terrified with two naked arms about his neck, and
close

close at his cheek a cold face, breathing time to the cadence of his courser's gallop. The race continued long without intermission; for the lane proved not a short one: at length, at the entrance of a wild heath, the horse began to abate of his impetuosity, and Destiny, recovering breath, gained a little respite to his agony; for custom familiarizes every thing. The Moon broke from under the cloud, and darting her mild lustre directly upon him, discovered, to the astonished cavalier, an enormous figure of a man stark naked at his shoulder, with a horrid countenance, grinning in his face. This was no time for curiosity, he had no desire to ask questions, but clapping spurs to his horse, urged him on at full speed, till the animal, quite jaded, began to breathe short and thick. In an instant, wholly unexpected, the strange companion flipt from behind him to the ground, and fell a laughing. Destiny nevertheless pressed forward, and turning his head about, saw the phantom making off with great rapidity towards the place whence he came. This Destiny afterwards discovered to be . . . a poor wandering Madman in one of his nocturnal excursions from the adjacent village.

Whoever has read those amusing tales, called the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and recollects the fifth voyage of Sinbad the Sailor, may possibly recognize in Scarron's Madman strong features of that wonderful adventurer's OLD MAN OF THE SEA, which, from the custom of oriental moralists and other local considerations, supposing the fiction not destitute of foundation in reality, answers very nearly to the description modern voyagers and naturalists give of the OURAN-OUTANG, the ostensible link between the human and mere animal species. This also induces a warrantable and fair conclusion, that, as the Europeans were never scrupulous in seizing, and converting to their own purposes, the gems and trophies of the East, the Suffolk Damfel, the Madman of Scarron,

Scarron, and the Leonora of Burgher, are all but branches of the same family of Indian extraction.

The Arabian and French writer, as to the Fable, have both evidently the advantage of the German; for they have nature and probability on their side. Sinbad's and Destiny's adventures combine the terrible graces which arrest the attention of the Reader in the tale of Leonora, and keep the mind in no less a degree of agitation and suspense to the end. And the novelty of the surprise, which could neither be foreseen nor expected, in the denouement, gives it a seasonable relief, abstracted from the danger of false impressions justly to be apprehended from the other; for which no moral founded in imposture can make amends. On a comparative view, a reader of no very flippant conception, by a risible association of ideas, might easily convert the preternatural machinery of the German story into burlesque; for the relief of many an ingenuous and timid mind on all such extravagant suppositions, however popular, "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

THE END.

DUBLIN,
Sept. 17, 1798.

O M I S S I O N S.

THE Theory of ANIMAL MAGNETISM, a recent Imposture, which has given occasion to a variety of Philosophic Investigation, and furnished matter for a very laughable Farce, has its origin in the natural history of the Torpedo and Electrical Eel.* It was a matter of speculation set afloat by a cunning French Philosopher of the medical tribe, in pursuit of notoriety, which he contrived to render subservient to the purposes of his vanity and his purse, giving it something of oracular éclat, by a dexterous combination of the descriptions left by Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, and others, of certain Priestesses, whose prophetic throes and hysteric affections in cases of consultation are admirably exemplified and illustrated by the magnetized damsels and matrons of the present æra. For the sex, among the ancients as well as moderns, have, by the artful and designing, been generally found convenient instruments as well as dupes of imposition; even within the narrow sphere of our own observation, there are not wanting females of curiosity and enterprize, who, in the rage for Animal Magnetism, started forth candidates, and having gone through the previous gradations, awakened from their delirium, to speak in the language of the adepts, surprised with the luminous Crisis. Giraldus commonly called Cambrensis, a native of Wales and Bishop of St. David's, in his Itinerary published towards the close of the 12th century, gives a picture of the extacies of certain Welsh enthusiasts, so nearly resembling the phenomena attending Animal Magnetism, that the one, with some trifling verbal modifications, seems merely a copy of the other under a different designation. Those who are yet strangers to this species of illusion will find an abstract of the passage from Giraldus Cambrensis, in

* For a very full and clear account of the Torpedo and Electrical Eel, see Cavallo on Electricity.

in Warrington's History of Wales, 4to, London, 1782, 2d Edition, pp. 102, 3.

" There were amongst the Welsh certain persons whom they called *Awenyddion*, a word expressive of poetical raptures. These persons, when consulted about any thing doubtful, inflamed with a high degree of enthusiasm, were to all appearance carried out of themselves, and seemed as if they were possessed by an invisible spirit; yet they did not declare a solution of the difficulty required, but by the power of wild and inconsistent circumlocution, in which they abounded, any person who observed the answer would at length, by some turn or digression in the speech, receive, or fancy they did, an explanation of what was sought. From this state of extacy they were at last roused as from a deep sleep, and were compelled, as it were, by the violence of others, to return to their natural state. Another thing, it is said, was peculiar to these persons; that when they recovered their reason they did not recollect any of those things which in their extacy they had uttered. And if it happened that they were again consulted about the same or any other thing, they would be certain to express themselves in other and far different words. This property was bestowed upon them, as they fancied, in their sleep; at which time, according to Giraldus, it appeared to some of them as if new milk or honey was poured into their mouths; to others, as if a written scroll had been put into their mouths; and on their awaking, they publicly professed that they had been endowed with these extraordinary gifts. This imaginary spirit of divination, has been also in much usage in the Highlands of Scotland, and is there known under the expressive term of SECOND SIGHT."

MASQUERADES, which are by most people imagined peculiar to the moderns, and exclusively confined to Europe, were

were in request among the Israelites; and, let not the minds of the pious and well-disposed revolt at the assertion, mention is made of them in the Scriptures; not, you may be satisfied, in the way of encouraging them, but wholly in reprobation of the folly and indiscretion of indulging a propensity to amusements of their seductive and immoral influence.

Dramatic Writers do not plume themselves on a strict adherence to genuine history; what is called poetic probability is all they look to, and in a general way, little more is required: Their business is to delineate character, and diversify their scenes, so as to interest and affect their auditors; not to establish facts. On this principle, the liberties Dryden has taken in his tragedy of Don Sebastian, are agreeable to usage, and stand so far excused. The prose writer who relates a story, is bound by a severer law, and as an historian, should confine himself to the truth. The accurate and judicious pen of Mr. Addison, has been misguided, by a sprightly French writer, it seems, in relation to Muley Moluc, a principal character of that play. [Spectator, vol. v. No. 349.] As the story is happily calculated to amuse, as well as instruct, the chief object we have had in view throughout these pages, our Readers will perhaps be pleased to see the account of the African Monarch, as Mr. Addison gives it, contrasted with what we have reason to believe the true history of the same event.

“ I shall conclude this paper with the instance of a person who seems to me to have shewn more intrepidity and greatness of soul in his dying moments, than what we meet with among any of the most celebrated Greeks and Romans. I met with this instance in the History of the Revolutions in Portugal, written by the Abbot de Vertot.

When Don Sebastian, King of Portugal, had invaded the territories of Muli Moluc, Emperor of Morocco, in order to

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dethrone

dethrone him, and set the crown upon the head of his nephew, Moluc was wearing away with a distemper which he himself knew was incurable. However, he prepared for the reception of so formidable an enemy. He was indeed so far spent with his sickness, that he did not expect to live out the whole day, when the last decisive battle was given; but knowing the fatal consequences that would happen to his children and people, in case he should die before he put an end to that war, he commanded his principal officers that, if he died during the engagement, they should conceal his death from the army, and that they should ride up to the litter in which his corpse was carried, under pretence of receiving orders from him as usual. Before the battle began, he was carried through all the ranks of his army in an open litter, as they stood drawn up in array, encouraging them to fight valiantly, in defence of their religion and country. Finding afterwards the battle to go against him, though he was very near his last agonies, he threw himself out of his litter, rallied his army, and led them on to the charge; which afterwards ended in a complete victory on the side of the Moors. He had no sooner brought his men to the engagement, but, finding himself utterly spent, he was again replaced in his litter, where laying his finger on his mouth, to enjoin secrecy to his officers, who stood about him, he died a few moments after in that posture."

The following relation is extracted from an account of a Journey to Mequinez, the residence of the present Emperor of Morocco, on the occasion of Commodore Stewart's embassy thither, for the redemption of the British captives in the year 1721, by John Windus; London, printed by Jacob Tonson, 1728. The Author in his preface, speaking of his work, says: "As I had the honour to attend Mr. Stewart into the Emperor of Morocco's dominions, I continued in
these

those parts, between three and four months, which time I employed in gathering such materials as encouraged me to proceed in the following work: and in this I have been particularly careful, not to deliver any thing, but what either came under my own observation, or was supported by authorities not to be doubted of," &c. &c. This writer's account of the battle of Don Sebastian, [pp. 73, 4, 5, 6.] runs thus: "The 18th [June] we decamped between five and six in the morning, and passed the river *Elmabasen*, famous for the battle fought between Don Sebastian King of Portugal, and the Moors; as this story had given matter to Sir Richard Steele,* to furnish the world with a paper of the heroical virtue of Muley Moluc, then king of Morocco, it gave me the curiosity to enquire, whether they had any historical account thereof; but found only a traditional story, which most of them agreed in, differing much from Sir Richard Steele, who gives the praise of heroick virtue to the Moorish king, whereas the story of the country attributes it to a slave; for Muley Moluc was a prince very much beloved by his people, but infirm, and at the time he left Morocco, to defend his country against Don Sebastian, was so ill, that he was forced to be carried in a litter, and when he came to Alcazar, (about six miles from the place where the battle was fought) he there died; upon which a slave of his called Mirwan, (whose name the

* Sir Richard Steele, the conductor and ostensible Author of the Spectator. It is now universally known Sir Richard was not the sole writer of that elegant and useful periodical paper. It was the joint production of several hands, the most eminent wits of the time, whose papers are respectively distinguished by certain private signatures agreed on for the purpose. Mr. Addison was a liberal contributor to that work, as well as the Tatler and Guardian. His signature was one of the letters in the word CLIO, and by the particular letter of that word occasionally affixed, not only the writer, but his particular place of residence at the time, is pointed out. Thus the paper alluded to, must be ascribed not to Sir R. Steele, but to his friend and coadjutor Mr. Addison, then residing at his house in London, as we are taught to understand by the signature L.

the Moors, to this day, mention with great regard, because of the gallantry and service of the action) wisely considering the consequence of keeping secret the death of a prince so well beloved by his people, at a time when the two armies every day expected to join battle, contrived it so, as to give out orders for the king, as if he had been alive, making believe he was better than he used to be, till the battle was over; when the said slave (thinking he merited a better reward than what he met with) wished the Successor joy, both of the victory and empire; but the ungrateful Prince caused him to be immediately put to death, saying, he had robbed him of the glory of the action. The Portuguese who were dispersed in the battle, would not believe that their king was slain, but ran up and down the country, crying out, *Onde esta el Rey* (i. e.) *Where is the King?* the Moors often hearing the word *Rey*, which in Arabick signifies *Good sense*; told them, that if they had any *Rey*, they had never come thither.

Many of the ordinary people in Portugal will not persuade themselves, that Don Sebastian is yet dead: And there is now to be read on a monument in the great church of Bellem, near Lisbon, the following inscription:

Hoc jacet in tumulo, si fama est vera, Sebaſtes."

Mr. Boswell observes, and his observation is just, that it is the indispensable duty of every writer to be exact in his quotations. The distorted, mutilated, and spurious authorities disingenuously palmed upon their readers by Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, and their disciples, to serve their insidious purposes, would fill volumes, and have been abundantly exposed. Writers of a very different cast, without any premeditated intention to deceive, have fallen into great inaccuracies in this respect, which should be an admonition to readers of all descriptions, not to pin their faith on authorities at second hand, when they can resort to the originals.

The

The Spectator, [vol. vi. No. 438.] in his animadversions on a passionate disposition has the following passage:*

" If you would see passion in its purity, without mixture of reason, behold it represented in a mad Hero, drawn by a mad Poet. Nat Lee, makes his Alexander say thus :

" Away, begone, and give a whirlwind room,
 " Or I will blow you up like dust ! avaunt;
 " Madnefs but meanly represents my toil.
 " Eternal difcord !
 " Fury ! revenge ! difdain and indignation !
 " Tear my fwoln breast, make way for fire and tempeft.
 " My brain is burft, debate and reason quench'd;
 " The storm is up, and my hot bleeding heart
 " Splits with the rack, while passions like the wind,
 " Rife up to heaven, and put out all the ftars."

Every passionate fellow in town talks half the day with as little consistency, and threatens things as much out of his power." The whole paper well deserves to be read ; but there is not one word of the rant there cited, in the part of Alexander : It belongs to quite another personage, and is besides incorrectly given. In the third act of the Rival Queens, where Roxana, Caffander, and Polipercon are the interlocutors, it is Roxana, chafed by those odious archtraitors, who thus exhibits the picture of female fury :

Away, begone, and give a whirlwind room,
 Or I will blow you up like dust ; avaunt :
 Madnefs but meanly represents my toil.
Roxana and *Statira*, they are names
 That must for ever jar ; eternal difcord,
 Fury, revenge, difdain and indignation
 Tear my swell'n breast, make way for fire and tempeft.
 My brain is burft, debate and reason quench'd,

The

* This paper has the signature T. ascribed to Sir Richard Steele.

The storm is up, and my hot-bleeding heart
 Splits with the rack, while passions like the winds
 Rise up to heaven, and put out all the stars.
 What saving hand, O what almighty arm
 Can raise me sinking?

Rival Queens, 4to. 5th Edit. London 1704.

Bell in his edition [Edinburgh printed by the Martins 1782.] has given the angry Queen three lines modeled upon these, in a less extravagant strain; the rest are wholly omitted.

We have an instance of a similar mistake in the third volume of the Spectator, No. 241, the subject is the Absence of lovers. * The passage in view runs thus:

"ABSENCE is what the poets call death in love, and has given occasion to abundance of beautiful complaints in those authors who have treated of this passion in verse. OVID's Epistles are full of them. Otway's Monimia talks very tenderly upon this subject."

—————" It was not kind
 " To leave me like a turtle, here alone,
 " To droop and mourn the absence of my mate.
 " When thou art from me every place seems desert,
 " And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn.
 " Thy presence only 'tis can make me blest,
 " Heal my unquiet mind and tune my soul."

Orphan, Act II. Scene the last.

It is not Monimia, but Castalio that talks thus tenderly :

Cast. Monimia, my angel ! 'twas not kind
 To leave me like a turtle here alone,
 To droop and mourn the absence of my mate.
 When thou art from me every place is desert, &c.

Mon. Oh! the bewitching tongues of faithless men!
 'Tis thus the false hyæna, &c.

Mr.

* The paper is distinguished with a C. which is one of the letters used by Mr. Addison, implying that it was written at *Cbe/za*.

Mr. Sheridan, who, one should think, could not be mistaken in a quotation from a play, in which he had performed times without number, and on whose authority one might be tempted to lay a wager, gives us the following passage in his Lectures on Elocution. [Lect. IV. on Emphasis.]*

“ By means of Emphasis what passes in the mind is often shewn in a few words, which otherwise would require great circumlocution. Of which take the following instance from the Play of All for Love :

————— “ The fault was mine

“ To place thee there, where only, thou, couldst fail.”

“ In this scene Anthony, having found out that his friend Dolabella, whom he had employed on a commission to Cleopatra, instead of discharging the trust reposed in him, had suffered his own passion for that dangerous beauty so far to prevail, as to give up his friend's cause, and urge his own love-suit to her; at first upbraids Dolabella in the bitterest terms for his treachery. But afterwards when he cools,” &c.

Again in the succeeding Lecture [Lect. V. on Pauses and Stops.]* He quotes the same line with a second comment upon it, thus “ And had they placed three commas in the line quoted from All for Love, as thus :

To place thee there, where only, thou, couldst fail. ———
The full import would have been at once perceived.”

These Lectures were several times delivered by himself to audiences consisting of four or five hundred at a time, and went through different editions: The first in quarto, and afterwards in octavo, corrected by himself, and no error was ever in the least suspected. On my undertaking the first Dublin edition, I turned to the play of All for Love; no such passage was to be found in it; I consulted Shakspeare's

Anthony

* Quarto edit. London, 1762, pp. 67, 8, and p. 81. Octavo edit. London, 1787, pp. 84, 5, and p. 102. It were to be wished there were the only errors that disgrace a spurious edition of Mr. Sheridan's Lectures printed in Dublin.

Anthony and Cleopatra, which was the original, Dryden's being but an alteration from Shakspeare, and was equally unsuccessful: I mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Sheridan; he laughed at my assertion, and insisted I had overlooked it; for it was impossible he could have committed such a blunder. There it rested; but one evening sitting at Young's tragedy of the Revenge, it was the last time poor unfortunate Mossop performed Zanga, I was surpris'd to hear the passage in dispute address'd by Carlos to his friend Alonzo, not in a scene of reproach, but emulous generosity, respecting Leonora, thus:

————— The crime was mine,
Who plac'd thee there, where only thou could'st fail, &c.
Revenge, Act II.

If such consummate masters, whom no man can suspect of an intention to mislead, are not exempt from errors, which in themselves, it must be admitted, are of no great consequence, should we not be upon our guard in more important matters, and never trust implicitly to quotations, even though Tom Paine himself should stake his reputation on their fidelity? It may also afford a hint to our testy disputants, male and female, not rashly to form conclusions, or trip up their modester opponents with borrowed authorities. Pope, who, maugre all the strictures of fastidious critics, is one of the best and most instructive poetic writers in any language, reprobates, with just severity, the self-sufficiency of tenacious wranglers, and at the same time prescribes a golden rule of conduct which all may reduce to practice with advantage:

Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence:
Some positive, persisting Fops we know,
Who if once wrong, will needs be always so;
But you, with pleasure own your errors past,
And make each day a Critique on the last.

Though

Though no reader of feeling and taste can deny the Author of the Seasons the due praise of being, on suitable occasions, eminently pathetic, yet the affecting Episode of Celadon and Amelia has a recommendation which renders it peculiarly interesting. It is founded in truth.* The circumstances which a few years before unhappily occurred, though somewhat disguised perhaps to conceal the obligation, are taken from Gay. Both were poets; but Gay has given the melancholy account of John Hewitt and Sarah Drew, which is manifestly the original, in prose; and, as a matter of taste, it would be hard to determine which has the advantage. It is easy to perceive that Gay wrote from immediate impressions, and in his relation of that awful event he has left one of the finest examples of the epistolary style of writing in its kind that is to be met with in our language. Neither of those writers can lose much; the reader must be a gainer, by comparing them.

FROM MR. GAY TO MR. F——.

STANTON-HARCOURT, AUG. 9, 1718.

THE only news you can expect to have from me here, is news from Heaven, for I am quite out of the world, and there is scarce any thing can reach me except the noise of thunder, which undoubtedly you have heard too. We have read in old authors, of high towers levelled by it to the ground, while the humble vallies have escaped: The only thing that is proof against it is the laurel, which however I take to be no great security to the brains of modern authors. But to let you see that the contrary to this often happens, I must acquaint you that the highest and most extravagant heap of towers in the universe, which is in this neighbourhood, stands still undefaced, while a cock of barley in our next field has been consumed to ashes. Would

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* Thomson's Summer, l. 1171; published in 1727, nine years after the Narrative of Gay.

to God that this heap of barley had been all that had perished! For unhappily beneath this little shelter sat two much more constant lovers than ever were found in romance under the shade of a beech-tree. John Hewit was a well-set man of about five-and-twenty; Sarah Drew might be rather called comely than beautiful, and was about the same age: They had passed thro' the various labours of the year together with the greatest satisfaction; if she milked, 'twas his morning and evening care to bring the cows to her hand. It was but last fair that he bought her a present of green silk for her straw hat; and the poesy on her silver ring was of his chusing. Their love was the talk of the whole neighbourhood; for scandal never affirmed that they had any other views than the lawful possession of each other in marriage. It was that very morning that he had obtained the consent of her parents, and it was but 'till the next week that they were to wait to be happy. Perhaps in the intervals of their work they were now talking of their wedding-cloaths, and John was suiting several sorts of poppies and field-flowers to her complexion, to chuse her a knot for the wedding-day. While they were thus busied (it was on the last of July between two and three in the afternoon) the clouds grew black, and such a storm of lightning and thunder ensued, that all the labourers made the best of their way to what shelter the trees and hedges afforded. Sarah was frightened, and fell down in a swoon on a heap of barley. John, who never separated from her, sat down by her side, having raked together two or three heaps, the better to secure her from the storm. Immediately there was heard so loud a crack, as if Heaven had split asunder; every one was solicitous for the safety of his neighbour, and called to one another throughout the field. No answer being returned to those who called to our lovers, they stepped to the place where they lay; they perceived the
barley

barley all in a smoke, and then 'spyed this faithful pair, John with one arm about Sarah's neck, and the other held over her, as to screen her from the lightning. They were both struck in this tender posture. Sarah's left eyebrow was singed, and there appeared a black spot on her breast; her lover was all over black, but not the least signs of life were found in either. Attended by their melancholy companions, they were conveyed to the town, and the next day interred in Stanton-Harcourt church-yard. My lord Harcourt, at Mr. Pope's and my request, has caused a stone to be placed over them, upon condition that we should furnish the epitaph, which is as follows :

When Eastern lovers feed the funeral fire,
On the same pile the faithful pair expire;
Here pitying heaven that virtue mutual found,
And blasted both that it might neither wound.
Hearts so sincere th' Almighty saw well pleas'd,
Sent his own lightning, and the victims seiz'd.

But my lord is apprehensive the country people will not understand this; and Mr. Pope says he'll make one with something of Scripture in it, and with as little poetry as Hopkins and Sternhold.

Yours, &c.

JOHN GAY.

Those who are desirous of seeing on what narrow foundations a genius for the Drama can build a Tragedy, will do well to consult the Guardian. The first volume of that work, No. 37, contains the relation of a scene of misfortunes which really happened some years ago in Spain. Short as the account is, it supplied Dr. Young with materials for his Tragedy of the Revenge; in which we may fairly presume he had Othello in view, and aspired to break a lance with Shakspeare.

“ Don

“ Don Alonzo, a Spanish nobleman, had a beautiful and virtuous wife, with whom he had lived for some years in great tranquillity. The gentleman, however, was not free from the faults usually imputed to his nation; he was proud, suspicious, and impetuous. He kept a Moor in his house, whom, on a complaint from his Lady, he had punished for a small offence with the utmost severity. The Slave vowed revenge, and communicated his resolution to one of the Lady's women, with whom he lived in a criminal way. This creature also hated her mistress, for she feared she was observed by her; she therefore undertook to make Don Alonzo jealous, by insinuating that the gardener was often admitted to his Lady in private, and promising to make him an eye-witness of it. At a proper time agreed on between her and the Morisco, she sent a message to the gardener, that his Lady, having some hasty orders to give him, would have him come that moment to her in her chamber. In the mean time she had placed Alonzo privately in an outer room, that he might observe who passed that way. It was not long before he saw the gardener appear. Alonzo had not patience; but, following him into the apartment, struck him at one blow with a dagger to the heart; then dragging his Lady by the hair, without enquiring farther, he instantly killed her.

Here he paused, looking on the dead bodies with all the agitations of a dæmon of revenge; when the wench who had occasioned these terrors, distracted with remorse, threw herself at his feet, and in a voice of lamentation, without sense of the consequence, repeated all her guilt. Alonzo was overwhelmed with all the violent passions at one instant, and uttered the broken voices and motions of each of them for a moment, until at last he recollected himself enough to end his agony of love, anger, disdain, revenge, and remorse, by murdering the Maid, the Moor, and himself.”



ON THE ORIGIN OF
BÜRGER'S LEONORA,
FROM THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE,
1799.

The (two) following Letters were addressed to the Editor of a literary journal in London, with whose plan it is inconsistent to insert articles of correspondence: from him they were handed to us for publication. Our desire to oblige the foreign author has prompted us to admit them: yet we consider it as a mere question of curiosity, whether Bürger's Ballad is in any degree a refaccimento: his merit is not diminished by the pre-existence of the story. In the second volume of Poems by Robert Southey, p. 145, may be found an extract from Matthew of Westminster, relating a tale also occurring in Olaus Magnus and in the Nuremberg Chronicle, the catastrophe of which bears an obvious resemblance to the story of Lenore. This incident perhaps has been used by some Minnesinger, and has contributed its sparkles to kindle the imagination of Bürger.

MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

DEAR SIR,

ON a short excursion to the Lower Rhine, I happened to stop for dinner at the post-house of *Glandorf*, a small place in the bishoprick of *Osnabruck*.—Besides my fellow-traveller, a gentleman of *Valenciennes*, there was no other company but a young chanoinesse of the abbey of *Essen*, who was going on a visit to her noble parents in the neighbourhood of *Osnabruck*.—Dinner was served, and the post-master, a Mr. *Cordes*,

C c

joined

joined us, to do the honours of the table rather than to partake of the fare. My Frenchman had soon engaged in a conversation with the lady; and, *tandis qu'il pouffoit sa fortune*, I boarded the post-master, in whom I was agreeably surprised to meet with a man of learning, astonishingly well versed both in English and German literature. He seemed pleased to hear that the latter had become more than ever familiar to the English reader. I mentioned sundry good translations to him, and when I happened to speak of the late elegant edition of *Bürger's Leonora*, he could not refrain from saying, "I wish they had honoured the work with a less fine edition, and not accused the author of plagiarism." These words occasioned a more minute enquiry. He insisted upon the fable being of Saxon origin, and offered to produce an old man, an inhabitant of the place, who would repeat nearly the whole poem in Low Dutch; adding that this man frequently heard it recited in his youth, by people still older than himself, from whom he had learned it. My time would not permit me to stop for the man; but having told Mr. Cordes that I meant to come back by the same road, he had the goodness to promise me his opinion in writing concerning the origin of the fable; which, in fact, I found in readiness when I arrived a second time at Glandorf, and herewith I send you a translation of it. You will as a patron of German literature find means of giving it publicity, and thereby remove the error into which the admirers of that truly beautiful Ballad have been led concerning its origin.

Your's, &c.

Hamburg, April 9, 1799.

C. L.

AGREEABLY

AGREEABLY to your kind request I communicate to you with pleasure, in writing all I know, and what I already have told you by word of mouth, concerning Bürger's Leonora, considered as a *popular tale in lower Saxony*. I do so with the greatest satisfaction, as it confirms Bürger's own assertion: that an old Low-Dutch ballad furnished him with the idea of that piece, which assertion you will see stated in the German Mercury—(*der Deutsche Mercur*, sect. 2. and in sect. 4. of Mr. Schlegel) in contradiction to some English antiquarians, who say, that Bürger took his Leonora from a collection of old Ballads, published in London, in three volumes, in 1723, and in which the matter of that Poem is contained in a story, entitled: *The Suffolk Miracle, or a Relation of a young Man, who a Month after his death appeared to his Sweetheart.*

I have often heard the tale repeated by sundry persons of this place; and among others by a man of the age of 75 years. A still greater proof of its being a popular tale of Low Saxon origin, is its being so universally known in those parts; and I heard it several times recited almost in the same manner by my step-mother, who is 71 years old, lives in a place called Rheine, at five German miles distance from hence, in the bishopric of Munster, and assured me, that in her youth she heard it often related by several people. The story runs as follows:

The lover enlists in the army, is killed, appears by night, gently rapping at the door of his sweetheart. She asks, Who's there? "*Dien leef is dar,*" is his answer. She opens the door, gets behind him on his horse; they gallop away in the swiftest course. Then the swain says these identical words:

" *De mond, de schint so belle,*

De doden riet so schnelle.

Fiens Leeuken gruvolt di ok?"

" *Wat scholl mi gruveln, du bist ja by mi.*"

She

She replies. After they have been galloping for a good while, he makes up to a church-yard—The graves open; horse and rider are swallowed up, and the woman is left behind in darkness and gloom. . . . “*Sapperment! en scholl ebn wual gruveln!*” will the old man add in his peculiar humour.

You see that the progress of the fable is the same as in Bürger's *Leonora*; and this very similarity, nay this wordly similarity, has with some raised a doubt about Bürger's assertion to Schlegel, viz. that he had taken merely a few hints from an old Saxon ballad.

Yet—that I may not injure our poet's known veracity and candour; I must say, that it appears pretty natural to me, that, on hearing the old story related, Bürger immediately conceived the idea of his *Leonora*; and that afterwards, perhaps, after the lapse of many years, he could not himself, distinctly recollect, and, in his statement to his friend, separate from his own fictions what originally belonged to the old tale. Whoever has made it his study to examine similar productions, either taken from or built upon popular sayings, will most certainly be of my opinion in this particular.

If even the whole ground-work of the poem were not of Bürger's own invention, it can however not be denied, that it has considerably gained under his hands: *Leonora's* frantic anguish when she does not meet her lover among the returning warriors—the language of comfort of her mother—her contempt of the sacrament, and her incredulity in its virtues, which motives the apparition—are not to be met in the oral tradition.

It appears, that the tale originally passed from mouth to mouth in rhyme and verse, till in progress of time it entirely lost that form.

The explanation of the resemblance of our Tale with the *Suffolk Miracle* I must leave to you. Perhaps it is so old that the Saxons carried it over to England. For my part, I am
fully

fully satisfied that Bürger did not take his Poem from any English ballad, but from an old Low-Dutch tale; the more so, as Mr. Schlegel assures us, that Bürger in the study of the old English ballads confined himself almost exclusively to *Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry*.

Glandorf.

Your's, &c.

J. FRANCIS CORDES.

TO
THE EDITOR OF
THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

SIR,

IN your Magazine or Register for September last, I observe a Letter, dated Hamburg, April 9th, 1799, and, connected with it, another as from Glandorf, of posterior note, on the Origin of Bürger's Leonora; a subject which had engaged my Father's attention soon after the splendid edition of that Poem made its appearance; and early in the year 1798, his Remarks were committed to press.* The pages containing those Remarks, together with other articles of information, which I find you have elsewhere adopted and converted to use, were upon a general principle, or I misconceived you, with no uncandid or inimical intention, transmitted to your address, some months previous to the publication in question; but, as might easily be perceived on the face of them, they were by no means the whole of the work. As far as they go, they are in themselves for so much complete; but though in the hands
of

* See page 161, *passim*.

of several select friends in London, Edinburgh, Bath and Liverpool, as well as in Dublin, they have never been offered to the public eye; nor has the work, though in such a state of forwardness, even yet been advertized, owing to an accident, by which a considerable portion of the impression was rendered useless, and certain delays on the part of the Printer, which could not conveniently be obviated. The writer of those Letters, upon which I am about to hazard a few remarks, has, however, with peculiar address, fastened upon my Father's idea, and dexterously contrived a kind of indirect answer to his animadversions, as it were by anticipation; for his critique, in various places, manifestly alluded to, is carefully kept out of sight. This to me, I must confess, carries with it something of unfairness; being by obvious implication an encroachment upon private property, at the same time subjecting you to the imputation of a breach of confidence; public curiosity is in a great degree by that means forestalled, and if profit were the object, that object, so far as the influence of your instructive publication extends, must be ultimately defeated.

Two widely different opinions are started, respecting the matter in contest. To one of them only you have condescended to give publicity, while, contrary to the declared purpose of the British Register, all notice of the other seems studiously suppressed; yet surely if the subject itself was of sufficient importance to merit such distinction, the parties should have at least equal opportunity of speaking for themselves; or if partiality attached to either, in point of nationality as well as priority, the argument in favour of domestic pretensions might have claimed the preference. The opposition, it should seem, is a partnership affair; but on an attentive review of the context, the natural construction is, that the writer of the introductory Epistle, and the accomplished Maitre D'Hotel, the pretended author of the second, are individually

dividually but one and the same person; and notwithstanding his continental exterior, *bona fide*, an Englishman, more concerned for the advancement of German literature, and the reputation of Bürger, than the honour of his own country. This, however unnatural, is a case by no means uncommon with the new-fangled refiners of the present age. I am, thank my stars, one of those who are not ashamed of their country, and would on all honest occasions give my suffrage in her favour. I am, I trust, a friend to humanity, an admirer of genius, and a well-wisher to the propagation of letters; but I am also a lover of truth, and would not even for my country, far less to serve the purposes of a party, peevishly controvert facts, or arrogate distinctions, to which she had not a legitimate claim. These are my principles; I speak as I think, and what I conceive right, I have no hesitation, on proper occasions, to maintain. I think our continental accuser wrong, and therefore oppose him: I think in too servilely adopting the whims and prodigalities of other countries, we are wrong, and therefore condemn it; but I am far from encouraging national reflections, and have assuredly no intention of giving personal offence. One capital disqualification, I am sensible, and with too much reason I fear it is not the only one, I labour under: I was born among you. It is unfortunately a fact, verified by daily experience, that from some unaccountable predilection, peculiar to these islands, when a native and a foreigner enter the lists, the current of prejudice runs, right or wrong, in favour of the latter. Through that channel I have no expectations: It is to the fairness of my deductions, and the equity of my cause, I look for an impartial decision. Such enquiries are not without their importance: conducted with temper and decorum they may contribute to instruction, divested of its formalities, and, at least as well as a Novel or a Fairy Tale, serve to ameliorate the pressure of
severer

feverer occupations. The Writer can speak from experience, and believes he is not singular; but of this in its place.

Your advocate in the case of Leonora, aware of some difficulties in his way, takes his ground with circumspection; but proceeds not incontinently to the point. Like a skilful partizan, he makes his approaches at a distance, and skirmishes under cover of a masked battery. The round-about method of marshalling his forces; the irrelevant matter of the preamble; his apocryphal journey; the finesse of the adventure of the inn; his guarded predilection for a particular hypothesis; and his imposing simplicity of style, all speciously calculated to mislead, betray a suspicion of his materials; and intimate a latent something which he seems unwilling to avow. His visible anxiety for the reputation and uncommon qualifications of "mine Host of the Garter," astonishing to his readers, as partly he acknowledges they appeared to himself, is besides an unfavourable symptom, which adds little to the credit of his relation, and operates untowardly for the interest of his cause.

His positions lead to a twofold object; to prove that the story of Leonora or the Suffolk Miracle, is not of English growth; and to confine the merit of it to Bürger. 'Tis labour thrown away. Weigh the matter attentively; give to both sides their accessories, and let impartiality hold the balance. To dwell upon his weakest arguments is unnecessary; nor need we follow him step by step in the detail. It will be sufficient to shew the futility of the strong, if any can deserve that epithet, where all are nearly of the same stamp, founded wholly upon hearsay, and report at second-hand, without any authentic credentials, or written memorial of ancient date, to support them. I appeal, my most learned adversary! to facts, and without troubling myself unnecessarily with adventitious pleas, out of thy own mouth will I condemn thee.

We

We are given to understand, that upon a "more minute enquiry, He," the intelligent postmaster, as he is described,* "insisted upon the fable being of Saxon origin, and offered "to produce an old man," who by the way is not produced, "an inhabitant of the place, who would repeat nearly the "whole poem in Low Dutch; adding, that this man frequently heard it recited in his youth, by people still older "than himself, from whom he had learned it." On the same authority we are likewise previously given to understand, and it is subsequently insisted upon, that the whole poem is Bürger's; and Bürger is comparatively a young man. Here then, in the first instance, the gentleman entangles himself in a dilemma. Either he must give up the claim of Bürger's originality, or his informer's character for veracity and precision: of two evils to choose the least, let us suppose it the latter; then what becomes of his argument? His premises are unfounded, and, the consequence is inevitable, his whole system must fall to the ground. . . . Admitting the antiquity of the fable, and its antiquity I should be loth to impeach, Bürger indisputably has contributed to its restoration; he may have revised, corrected and improved; or as Dryden, Pope and others have Chaucer's Poems; he may have modernized it; that praise is decidedly his due; in that light, he is its Father, and Leonora his Child by adoption; but however dressed, it does not vitiate its descent; Leonora by whatever name or appellation designated, is still the self-same person, one and individual, undeniably the offspring of her original parent.

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* Those who furnish posthorses, &c. for the accommodation of travellers, here with us, poor Islanders! are in familiar and vulgar acceptance, Innkeepers; on the grand tour, where every thing forsooth must be in style, however in fact inferior, they are in the more dignified phrase dubbed Postmasters.

In this awkward predicament your travelling inquisitor suspends the proceedings, and after a convenient interval, of which, as we may well presume, he took care to avail himself, with renovated powers, in character of advocate for Saxony, he returns to the charge, and armed cap-a-pie, smites our poor antiquarians; from Dan to Beerheba, for attempting to set the saddle on the right horse. Flying rumour and hearsay is his forte. Neither am I destitute of proofs in that way, at least equally cogent and authentic; and if dates be compared, of a still more remote reach. My Father, who is near seventy, learned the story from his Nurse's Husband, whose memory even now is respected in his village, a village or rather hamlet, in Lancashire, near the flourishing town of Prescot, where he was honourably interred at an advanced time

* Giller's Green (Thill-Horse Green?) . . . where he enjoyed a small patrimony, whence sometime before his decease he removed to a new house he had purchased, directly opposite the great window at the East end of St. Peter's Church, Liverpool. He was of the class of labouring men.

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

So sings the pensive Gray, and his idea will not be hurt by a little funeral anecdote. . . . On the demise of the venerable old man a quantity of bread and good malt liquor was provided by his widow and sole executrix, of which timely notice was given; and before the coffin was placed upon the hearse, which conveyed his remains to Prescot, his native parish, pursuant to a clause in his last will so ordering, every poor person that came forward, man, woman and child, without exception, received a twopenny loaf and a pint of ale. A like portion of bread and ale was attributed to the poor at Prescot also; when, previous to his interment, the full service for the dead was performed by the Rector, the Reverend Mr. Quin; and an excellent sermon preached from Heb. ii. v. 22: *By faith Joseph when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.* . . . Each were the worthy beings among whom my Father received his early impressions!

time of life, when my Father was a young boy. The good old man had it from a relative of his own, a clock-maker of the name of Eccleston, who also was well cricken in years, and always gave it as a tale of former times. It was printed on a single half sheet, procured at a stall in Liverpool, and fluffed up with the Seaman's Garland, the lamentable History of Jane Shore, Tom Hickathrift, Jack the Giant-Killer and others; for his winter's evenings amusement and improvement in reading. Such was the simplicity and taste of that ancient contented neighbourhood! This, though I do not in general esteem hearsay allegations as the most immaculate and decisive, will doubtless carry its due weight in evidence of our story's being of ancient notoriety in England, and at least coeval with, if not prior to its rival of the Continent, which, if not identically the same, is manifestly of a kindred stock. But this, when corroborated by antique vouchers from the press, which cannot be rationally controverted or mistaken, must, I should imagine, obviate every cavil, and finally settle the dispute.

This I know will scarcely satisfy your persevering correspondent. The gentleman in his travelling capacity, is curious in his researches, that is perfectly in character, and opportunely, it seems, he falls in with a person of consummate intelligence, his communicative Host, not less able than willing to gratify his inquisitive guest, who as we have seen proves a strenuous partizan. He got a hint, no matter how, of a formidable force in array against him, and aware of the insufficiency of his outworks, has recourse to new levies, clearly for the purpose of countermining the assailants. Whose is the tale of Leonora? that is the question. Common fame, according to him, decides it in favour of Saxony; but, setting aside his militia of reporters, who are not wholly free from inconsistencies, the German Mercury (*der Deutsche Mercur*. Sect. 2d, &c.) is appealed to; but how does that mend the matter?

matter? In opposition to records of immemorial existence, a posthumous publication, a chronicle of to day, a common news-paper, is pressed into the service: upon what principle of reasoning, can such an authority defeat the claims of primogeniture, or put down sturdy objectors? Positive assertion, and the same rambling gossip's creed, tricked out in modern print, is but a sort of left-handed defence; a fond repetition of still the same posstrum exhibited in a more convenient vehicle. It furnishes nothing new, nothing more to the purpose, nothing more to be relied on, consequently nothing more convincing or conclusive. Our documents of established antiquity he cannot absolutely resist, but their authority he is anxious to evade. "The Collection of old Ballads published in London, and in which" as he parsimoniously admits "the matter of that Poem," meaning Leonora "is contained." Observe! he does slightlyly advert to; but he recognizes it with manifest constraint, and brings it, *to say no more*, for the sole purpose of depreciating its validity. In quoting the title of the Poem or Suffolk Miracle, as he slightlyly gives it, the most striking part, and that most material to the point at issue, is suppressed. I mean the incident of the horse and his preternatural expedition. The omission, we may presume, was intensional, perhaps not, with as many other perhaps as you please; for I have no pleasure in testing any gentleman with dissingenuousness; nevertheless in other respects, he is abundantly minute. He is needlessly particular as to the number of volumes, and hypercritically precise in the chronology of their publication, which he refers to the year 1423. A concession of some importance, which peradventure, unwittingly escaped him; Bürger was born in the year 1748. The inference is plain. Mr. Father, whose object was truth, to afford every unprejudiced reader a fair opportunity of judging for himself, has given the entire legend of the Suffolk Miracle, verbatim from the sole MS. this moment before me, as it stands; and whoever compares that
and

and Leonora together, needs no Spectacles to perceive a coincidence of circumstances, and a resemblance too close, to admit, without difficulty, the persuasion of its being purely accidental.

But be not surpris'd, gentle Reader! if by the way thou art inform'd of a fact as yet unhinted at, probably unsuspected. Much has been said of a Collection of old Ballads, in three volumes, printed Anno 1723. Our Critics, who cannot keep counsel, were they true adepts in ancient lore, being would have told us, no collection of that description in the archives of literature is discoverable; nevertheless, the inference as to Bürger is tenable and fair. There is a small typographical error in the date so assigned, it may be of the press, or possibly owing to one of two incidental causes, unnecessary to particularize: Be that as it may, it is of little consequence, the error is easily rectified; for 1723 read 1727. This is the edition cited by Dr. Percy in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, particularly in the short historical illustration prefixed to the *Dragon of Wantley*, where he acknowledges his obligations for some pertinent observations on that subject, and makes honourable mention of the former editor. Both have enriched their collections with curious prolegomena, at the head of the several ballads respectively adopted, and from this conformity of plan it is not improbable, the Reverend Dr. took the hint from his predecessor. The collection more particularly referred to, appears to have been the first of the kind, and the edition more immediately in contemplation, is expressly the third; another circumstance which your elaborate investigator has adroitly flurried over, willing, as at first view it might appear, to confine the knowledge of that miraculous tale in England to the era assigned. That there was no such collection in three volumes ever published, antecedent to the edition of 1727 may be safely asserted; it is evident, from the book itself. The two preceding editions extended no farther than

to a single volume each; even the edition of 1727, which is the third, and now in my hand, is not announced in the title page as one of a set; but was sent into the world, as a single volume also, though in the preface, which is pleasantly and sensibly written, we are led speedily to expect a continuation. Now allowing time for the sale of the two former impressions, which, being adorned with suitable engravings and for those days rather expensive, could hardly have been very rapid, we may reasonably fix the period of the first appearance of these legendary tales in that form, about the beginning of the century. How long before this contested phenomenon had been in circulation in a halfpenny ballad; how long before it had been handed about in manuscript; how long before the story might have passed from father to son by oral tradition; or how long before it might have been in requisition in the nursery

When finally by night

The village matron, round the blazing hearth,

Suspends the infant audience with her tales,

Breathing astonishment:

How long, I say, the Suffolk Miracle in one shape or other, might have been the theme of our rude admiring ancestors; I am not blessed with your correspondent's intuitive power over climates, epochs and eras to determine. Let me, however, not detract from his merit. His exertions in the cause, however unimportant, prove his patriotic feelings; supposing him really Saxon, and might fairly put my good friend John Bull to the blush. He leaves no stone unturned to do honour to his *natale solum*, and attach the laurel to his countryman; laudable so far as his intention; in which, if he fails, it affords a fine opportunity of deriding our folly in so unaccountably sacrificing at the shrine of vanity, and lavishing distinctions on exotic adventurers to the prejudice of domestic worth,

and

and discouragement of native talents. An English edition, splendid beyond compare, is published of his countryman's Poem, a single ballad, sought after and bought up with avidity at an enormous price; enormous we may surely call it, when three of the printed copies bring more in the shops, than was paid for the manuscript of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which for a length of years, consigned to dusty oblivion, lay mouldering on the shelves uncalled for and unnoticed. But this your worthy postmaster makes a pill at, and the compliment to his countryman is lost in the irritation he feels, at our attempting to claim the privilege of thinking, and what is simply and equitably our right. Such is foreign gratitude! such the reward of British genius!! and such the considerations deemed trivial and unimportant!!! The pre-eminence of foreign genius, ushered forth with signal distinctions, was lavishly asserted; the modest claim of our Suffolk Minstrel was brought forward, but not with insult or illiberality; and however by second sight, or otherwise, your ingenious correspondent got intimation of it, was by him and his abettors unceremoniously disputed. His arguments were incontinently espoused, and favoured with extensive circulation among us; but cold water thrown upon those for domestic desert. Is what was thought of such importance when a Foreigner was in question, then only matter of indifference when a Native is attached to our Country, and a Native in the case? Call you this backing your Friends, my Countrymen? I do not wish to enrich one sprig of bays from the temples of Bingen; on the contrary, I respect his talents, and willingly subscribe to his desert; so that the story has gained considerably under this "hand is not denied;" but I contend, that for its reception, and the high estimation it has acquired in England, it should not be considered as a mere curiosity. I have heard asked in Dublin for a single copy, and four Guineas offered for it, and the price was paid.

also due to his translators, who, in their turn, have pruned away his excrescencies, softened down his asperities, and exhibited him so much to advantage in their versions. A position which I foresee may be ungracious to some, and require something more than a bare *ipse dixit* to make good.

The German is not yet a language generally in vogue; of course competent judges of Bürger in his native uniform, are not extremely numerous among us; yet judges, more or less, we have among us, and to help out the quorum, we may call upon the translators, a description of writers, who, if not enthusiastically partial to their archetypes, are, for obvious reasons, not wont to under-rate them; or damp the ardour of curiosity, by depreciating works, which must necessarily have cost them time and pains in preparing for general reception. The Laureat, who, for the gratification of his countrymen, has rendered Leonora into the vernacular tongue, modestly speaking of the task he has so laudably performed, thus admonishes his readers: . . . "This is a translation line by line, and as near the original, as the restraint of versification and the idiom and genius of the different languages would admit; a closer version would in some places have been ridiculous, and in others profane." . . . Again: "This little Poem, from the singularity of the incidents, and the wild horror of the images, is certainly an object of curiosity; but is by no means held up as a pattern for imitation." By the way, the claim of merit, whatever it may be, for singularity of incident and wild horror of imagery was anticipated by our Suffolk Minstrel, but could not be perceived, it seems, till seen through a foreign medium. . . . Mr. Spence whose fervid youth, aiding and happily aided by the sister art, indulges greater freedom and a bolder touch; and Mr. Stanley, who with a Critic's skill and Poet's fire, improves the canvas, and gives it an effect peculiarly his own, upon the whole

whole concur in sentiment with the Laureat. It was said of Pope's Iliad, and not unworthily was it said :

That future ages shall with wonder seek
Who 'twas translated Homer into Greek.

Without going into the question of comparative excellence, at which the bigots to antiquity would shake their heads, it must be acknowledged, the author of the couplet, in a few words, gives us an advantageous idea of English genius, and for the purpose there can be no harm in taking the compliment literally; no disparagement then to your paragon of Saxony, or offence to her sanguine admirers, I would say to the English Leonora, take which version you will :

———— *mutato nomine de te*
Fabula narratur.

Whether this be, or be not, a case pertinently adduced, or *ceteris paribus*, apposite to the point, is submitted to the judges; but let him not boast of his impartiality who construes it a reflection on Bürger.

Our foreignized competitors, I am aware, will give no credit for this. All or none is their motto. They will rather compromise the claims of Bürger's originality, and sacrifice the cause of their justly-admired Favourite, than yield a single jot of it to their rivals. Will do it, did I say? they have done it; I have proved it; the letter proves itself. Waving the pretensions of Bürger, fresh ground is broken; England or Saxony, that is now the question. The contest becomes national, and at all events, to wrest the story from the Britons, and for ever to annihilate their saucy pretensions, your champion of the North is at no loss. In a single line he gives them the coup de grace; with a stroke of his pen he damns

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them . . . no ancient memorial or written monument has he in his power to confront them; in the lapse of ages ink is discharged; parchment perishes, and stone and mortar crumbles into dust. He goes roundly to work. Conjecture, pure conjecture is his dernier resort, and in that he is veritably without parallel. Thirteen hundred years to him are but as yesterday. With the speed of Pacolet's flying horse, or ghostly William's ghostly Charger, whip, spur and away, he hurries us back to the predatory times of Hengist and Horsa. . . . There his hopes rest at the fated goal. There he fixes the period of this wonderful story's importation into Britain. . . . We have been led a woundy dance, Sirs! Let us breathe.

Must we then tamely acquiesce, and with tacit submission, authorize the delusion? If so, what similar depredations may not in future be attempted. Adieu then to Robin Hood. Sherwood Forest may be found in the purlieus of Glandorf, and Birnham wood be brought to Dunfinane. Chevy-chace we must relinquish, and the Babes in the Wood must again be abandoned, unfortunately contained in the same volume with the Suffolk Miracle. . . . Well-a-day! what a doleful catastrophe must ensue! What a sad revolution among the feathered choirs! Poor Robin-red-breasts, the pathetic incident of your covering the deserted innocents painfully with leaves will no more be remembered; stripped of your ancient palladium, your little lives, wont to be held sacred in Britain, will be exposed; you will be treated as vulgar birds; your curious nests of moss will be rifled. In the bleak frosty glooms of December no more shall ye place confidence in man; enter fearless the rural cot, and hopping beneath the rustic board, pick up the crumbs there in safety; every prowling urchin will persecute you, and the epicure, refining upon gluttony, will twist your glossy necks, and have you spitted for the table. . . . For pity's sake suspend the tale of woe; it must not, shall not be; rest, gentle birds! secure; no lurking foe awaits

awaits you. This all is supposition, chimerical and groundless, and almost as far-fetched as his of Saxony, who in his zeal for the antiquity of the story of the Suffolk Miracle, alias the Dutch Ballad, alias Leonora, tells us, "perhaps it is so old that the Saxons carried it over to England," meaning as has been observed at the invasion of Hengist and Horsa. A bold assertion to be sure, and assertion, qualified with a perhaps, is all we have for it. We want proof more relative than this. . . . Well! conjectures cost nothing, and guarded with a perhaps, are as free to us as to the Postmaster, and for any thing that has as yet appeared, it may be English or Welsh, or perhaps Irish as well as Saxon.

The bards of Great Britain were a numerous and highly favoured tribe, who wanted neither invention to frame, nor skill to adapt to their harps, a tale so well suited to the temper and taste of the chivalrous times of King Arthur; and none better calculated in its turn, for the entertainment of his illustrious court, and his gallant knights of the round table. It was a subject that could not fail of being popular; thus the Saxon invaders, who frequently must have heard it from the itinerant minstrels of those days, picked it up and carried it back with them to their own country; and a pretty tale it was for the fugitives to cover the disgrace of their defeats, and conciliate the good will of their Desdemonas in their forests at home, who little scrupulous would indulge female curiosity, "and with a greedy ear devour up their discourse." That it could not possibly originate with them is proved from internal evidence. We perceive in it traces of local manners and customs, with a variety of other particulars essential to the fable, without which it could not have existed, and therefore must have been in its primary concoction, a constituent part. The peculiar style of the machinery, the preternatural incidents and scope of the plot altogether, furnish demonstration incontrovertible. The Saxons of those times and long after,
were,

were, to a man, Pagans, and could have no conception of a subject, that smells so powerfully of the cloister. They burned their dead, and could have no idea of spirits "doomed for a certain time to walk the night." The votaries of Woden, Thor and Freia had no churches and church-yards for cemeteries; and the business of their undertakers, if of that vocation any they had, was to collect faggots, not to provide coffins or winding-sheets, nor have I heard they used either palls, scarfs or hatbands. The place of Sexton, like many snug places among ourselves, must have been a mere sinecure; bells were unknown in the wilds of Saxony; even rappers, that grievous tax on the indolence and ease of High Life below Stairs, was a subsequent contrivance; the founding horn announced the coming guest; yet all, save one, are mentioned or necessarily implied in the progress of the story. Arthur and his Britons were Christians, and simplicity, enthusiasm and credulity, the popular characteristics. Every circumstance of this miraculous legend, impressed with congenial features, marks the offspring of superstition and monkish imposture; and if authority were wanting, that of Jeffrey of Monmouth, I presume, would be rejected; but Gildas, some five or six hundred years, a religious of elder repute, in his account of Miracles, has recorded not a few, upon which that of Suffolk might easily enough be grafted. Hence, admitting its positive antiquity as presumed by the ingenious Host, a presumption which may perhaps be erroneous, and on which I by no means insist, it could not be of Saxon, but clearly of British extraction. That the Suffolk Miracle, and the Saxon Leonora, notwithstanding some modern touches, have many traits in common he partially allows; but in throwing it so far back, however inconsistently, if we can guess at his meaning, he would transfer the charge of plagiarism, and insinuate that the Suffolk Minstrel was rather indebted to Bürger than Bürger in any wise obligated to our Suffolk Minstrel.

Having

Having thus far accomplished his desultory task, the learned Host or Postmaster as the text has it, in the fulness of self-complacency, contemplating his imaginary triumph, thus to a trial of skill in the person of his inquisitive guest, challenges the troop of sceptical readers. "The explanation of the resemblance of our tale," as he will needs have it, "to the Suffolk Miracle I must leave to you." . . . This my Father has some time ago done to his hand, as clearly stated in his Observations already referred to, which, as also before hinted, the gentleman somehow, or I am strangely mistaken, previously got a peep at, and aided by an odd concurrence of circumstances, has been at considerable pains to defeat. His own opinion of the matter in the sweeping clause, I have just been considering, upon his own principles, by a parity of reasoning in his own way, I think I have fairly confuted. A few things still remain, but ere we proceed to bould this matter to the bran, some apology. . . Stay, stay, somewhat peevishly interrupts Mr. Dapperwit, this is too long; so on another occasion, says old Polonius in the Play, and apropos, the same answer may serve both; but seriously, to make the most of your hint, Signor Dapperwit, enough, perhaps too much has been said on a subject which after all must remain for ever problematical. Enough and too much indeed, with a fastidious shrug, rejoins your modern Stagyrite, it puts one in mind of a good thing formerly said on the disputes about two rival cat-gut scrapers:

Strange all this difference should be,

"Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!

Yea, verily, and it might put thee in mind too of poor Chatterton, against whom, ill-fated youth! the doughty corps of wits rose up in fell array, and badgered to the death!

Did

Did he want merit? No,* he wanted bread; and in addition to the crime of poverty, he was an Englishman, and the harmless plagiarist of a name. Bürger, a foreigner, personally or through the indiscreet zeal of his admirers, we still, under

* We are supported on this question, take it in the rough: . . . "Johnson said of Chatterton: this is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things!" Boswell's Johnson, 2d edit. vol. 2, p. 412. Sensible how poor a figure virtue makes when laquied by pale poverty, and to his misfortune, as in the event it proved, sensible of the influence of a name, as a forlorn hope, this friendless youth sacrificed at the shrine of Apollo, under the appellation of one Rowley, a Monk, of another century; who, whatever it might contribute to the honour of his memory, could suffer no injury from the assumption. Yet surely the action, construe it as you may, was not without precedent. Are not all who shelter themselves under feigned signatures, a practice notoriously common; all who publish narratives founded on facts, that never had existence but in the writer's imagination; all who exhibit as translations, compositions in no other language extant; all who produce epistolary correspondences from the closets of celebrated characters never concealed but in the archives of their own pericraniums; all who present tours that were never made but in their own apartments; all who write letters to themselves in the name of others, and indulge the public with their answers, for special purposes which it might not be over-modest or convenient to avow; in effect, is not every anonymous writer, paragraphist, essayist, pamphleteer, or bookmaker, allowing all their merit, availing himself of a mask, and perhaps with less excusable incitements on a footing in that respect with Chatterton? Yet they in peace enjoy the plenteous harvest of their labours; and he, as the vilest criminal is, subjected to merciless persecution. It is fresh within the memory of many now living, that one of those celebrated musicians mentioned in the text, would in common for his morning's whet, swallow more than would have regaled that deserted young genius for a week, and would do alderman-like justice to a Lord Mayor's feast an hour after. Chatterton, with the slender pittance he could procure by his pen, enjoyed one only luxury, the luxury of now and then contributing his mite to the relief of a destitute mother and his sister, but even of that melancholy gratification unremitting cruelty speedily deprived them. In the fulfilment of the pious duty, sinking under the gripe of oppression, to satisfy the cravings of hunger, at the age of eighteen he had recourse to the bottle. Merciful God! 'twas armenic!

under correction, are disposed to think, appropriator of the honours of an entire poem; widely different too was the case with your reputed catgut scrapers; who can be strangers to the name and merit of Handel and Bononcini? they too were foreigners, who enjoyed their consequence and fared sumptuously every day: yet, candidly to speak, the sarcasm however misapplied has a seasoning of wit; but witticism is not orthodox; nor the dogma of an individual the go-cart for a world. The satirical genius to whom that epigrammatic fally is in general, though erroneously attributed,* was of so singular a temperament touching that delightful art, that he has been known to declare, the scraping of a cutler's grind-stone, or the hideous din of a pair of intriguing caterwaulers squalling their midnight duets was to his ears as agreeable as the finest concerto on the organ executed by the finger of Handel, in which predicament, Sir Critic! perhaps thou standest in regard to the subjects of present enquiry; but are you all, my Countrymen! thus stoically constituted? Prejudice apart, are
not

* The elegant translator of Pliny, in a very classical Collection of Original Letters under the assumed appellation of Sir Thomas Fitzosborne. . . . Alas, poor Chatterton! what greater was thy fault? . . . attributes this little Jue d'Esprit to Swift, and gives the two lines here cited, as the whole of it, upon which he founds a delicate ironical disquisition on the abuse of Verbal Criticism: (letter 63) but that ingenious gentleman is mistaken as to the author. The Dean of St. Patrick's, though much in his manner, had no title to it whatever. The original is in six lines, and was written by Mr. Byrom of Manchester; the curious Reader will find it in a Collection of his Poems well worth the perusal; it runs as follows:

EPIGRAM ON THE FEUDS BETWEEN THE ADMIRERS OF
HANDEL AND BONONCINI.

Some say, compared to Bononcini,
That Mynheer Handel's but a ninny;
Others aver, that he to Handel,
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle:
Strange all this difference should be
'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!

not ninety-nine out of a hundred of the elaborate discussions hourly obtruded from the press, every whit as unimportant, save to the paper-trade, and of as trifling a nature on the scale of amusement, as the burthen of an old song? Addison, who bore no contemptible sway in the republic of letters, and is allowed withal to have had pretty tolerable notions of the *utile dulce*, affords some pertinent instances of his predilection for ancient ballads. Who will say that his comments on Chevy-chace, and eke of the Children in the Wood, are not proofs of a better taste and a more innocent way of amusing himself, as well as his readers, than if the time had been lavished in treading the dark mazes of nefarious politics; disseminating scandal, or propagating false doctrines, heresy and schism? the fashionable occupation, the opprobrium and the bane of this our *enlightened* and *philosophising* age! Dr. Johnson does not condemn the conduct of the Author of the Spectators, and the same venerated Cenfor, who was never an advocate for trifling, in express terms, sanctions the tenour of our present lucubrations. These are his words: "What is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own; and "it is the business of critical justice to give every bird of the "Muses his proper feather." Why then to our story, and "if I were as tedious as a king I could find in my heart to "bestow it all on your worship."

Our opponent throws down the gauntlet, and marshals me the way that I should go. Like the flame of an expiring taper, after burning to the snuff, with intermitting gleams, still hovering o'er the socket, he hankers after Bürger; at intervals he quits him, at intervals returns; quits, returns again and quits; once more! he barely twinkles; this effort is his last. Alas! poor Ghost, go on I'll follow thee. . . . "For my part," so voucheth the learned Host, still hankering after Bürger, "I am fully satisfied" who doubts it; but are your readers satisfied? "that Bürger did not take his Poem from
"any

" any English Ballad, but from an old low Dutch Tale; the
 " more so as Mr. Schlegel assures us, that Bürger in the study
 " of the old English Ballads, confined himself almost exclusively
 " to Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry." Is not this on one
 side half giving up the question and begging it on the other? Begging is no crime, and seeing it is the fashion, let us follow the example, and as the song says, ' a begging we will go.' . .
 " Confined himself almost exclusively to Percy's Reliques," was the phrase, and a saving phrase it is; yet, tho' a general rule, like other general rules, it plainly admits of exceptions. Would not a man fond of reading, if occasion offered, be tempted to transgress it? I am sure I should, and so, or I mistake my man, would Bürger; a single trespass would sufficiently answer the end; and surely it is more than probable the temptation was not wanting. Would not the same curiosity that led him to enquire for Percy's Reliques, wherein our collection is so honourably noticed, in all likelihood excite a desire to peruse others of a like kind, for which there is no good reason to suppose he had far to seek? The book in question, antecedent to Percy's, had gone through three editions, we may suppose numerous ones, and then was in circulation. It was known even in the remotest quarters of Ireland: '*Et penitus toto divisos orbe Hibernos.*' The copy I have was purchased by an Irish Divine in the town of Cavan,* and was not the only one, nor confined to a corner. There is an affinity of old between the inhabitants of the two countries, I mean Saxony and England, and that renovated, strengthened and cemented by the addition of royal ties. This must
 F f naturally

* The Rev. John Jermyn:—his great-grand-daughter, the wife of John Parry, bookseller, Anglesea-street, had the book from her mother, who, as well as her father Mr. James Shore, a respectable citizen of Dublin, remembers the Suffolk Miracle, handed down from her reverend grandfire as a popular old story about the vicinage, in his childhood; the good couple full of years are still living.

naturally created in them a predilection for our history. Ballads are the brief chronicles of the times, and it is evident, such chronicles are in request among them, and our language an object of pursuit; how else came Percy to be so well known and understood on that side the ocean? The same causes that operated in favour of our right-reverend literary antiquarian, would likewise operate in favour of others in the same line, and by what means soever his collection obtained a footing there, upon the same principle, by fair deduction we may conclude to a certainty, his predecessor's, which is chiefly of the historical class, was the harbinger; procured the passport, and ultimately pointed out the way. These matters duly taken into consideration, your ingenious Host might have spared his exultations; his riddle needs no Oedipus; but it leads to a useful caution, and involves a difficulty, for which he possibly may not be prepared. Beware of mistaken zeal! no enemy does more mischief than an indiscreet friend. Admitting the existence of that same Dutch Ballad, on which such stress is laid, and knew they any other for their purpose it would not have been put under a bushel,* it is yet to be proved, that same Dutch Ballad itself is not a plagiarism; borrowed, and somewhat disguised, perhaps to conceal the fact,

* Our English Critics, somehow hurt as it should seem at our development of this poetical secret, have endeavoured to help out the foreign author by a reference to Southey, &c. we have read the extract referred to, but honestly confess we do not clearly perceive the obvious resemblance between a withered, superannuated beldam, poked out of her grave by her old coadjutor the devil, and a buxom young wench, alive and hearty, submitting to a voluntary elopement with her spouse apparent. Our Suffolk Miracle is not merely resemblance, it is identity. If Matthew Paris says any thing to the purpose, it is not against our argument, but directly in its favour. The extract bears date A.D. 852, and the scene of action is in Berkeley: *Ergo*, it is upon record, an English story of immemorial antiquity, which, as I take it, perfectly coincides with our idea of the Suffolk Miracle.

fact, from the English; consequently on their own principles, Leonora a copy at second hand; in other words an imitation of an imitation; which, without forcing the premisses, affords a second, and by no means an improbable solution of the likeness of the German Leonora to *our original* Suffolk Miracle . . . FIAT JUSTICIA.

I might here amuse my readers with a comparative analysis of the Suffolk Miracle, and the Poem of Leonora; discriminate the features of resemblance, and shew how and in what particulars, the one is an improvement on the other. I might pursue the same course with our different translations of Leonora, four of which are in possession of the Public, and comparing them with each other, and with the original, point out their several beauties, and not derogating from the merits of Bürger, shew wherein his translators have the pre-eminence—But, to borrow a phrase of classical extraction . . .

Gentlemen! I have done.

E.-A. W.

P. S. I saw within these few days a copy of Leonora in no very extraordinary binding, set at 13l. 13s.

THE following Letter was received just as the last sheet of this new impression of the preceding work was committed to press. The insertion of it, though not without consultation, may by some fastidious readers be construed vanity; be it so: to me, I freely acknowledge, *Dulce est laudari a laudato Viro*. The writer of it, is a gentleman whose various erudition and classical taste have secured to him an elevated rank among the Literati abroad, as well as in his own country;* at the

* Member of the Royal Irish Academy; Fellow of the Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth; Honorary Member of the Etruscan Academy of

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the same time that his conciliating manners, and above all the goodness of his heart, endear him more particularly to the favoured circle of his friends and acquaintance; of which number, I have to boast the happiness of being one. Allow me, My dear Sir! thus publicly to acknowledge your kindness, and the pleasure I take on all occasions in subscribing myself

Yours most faithfully,

SAMUEL WHYTE.

Friday, June 27, 1800.

TO SAMUEL WHYTE, ESQ., &c.

DEAR SIR!

ILATELY read with pleasure, and I hope some profit, your Miscellany. Your Remarks are acute; the original Letters inestimable, and the Extracts curious and interesting.

As a work of so much merit must ere long reach another edition, permit me to remind you that the story of the *Mysterious Mother* is fully detailed in the 9th volume of the *Spectator*, No. 688, Dublin, 1748. It is also told by Bandello, who lays the scene at Navarre . . . see Note (y) p. 272 of an "Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy." . . . If you have not added this imperfect work to your collection, and would

of Cortona, and Member of the Arcadian Academy of Rome. In the year 1690 when this learned Society took the name by which it has since been and is now distinguished, "it was resolved, that each member should assume a pastoral name:" agreeable to this fundamental principle of the institution the pastoral name decreed by the society to Mr. Walker on his admission, was EUBANTE TIRINZIO.

See his *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, wherein is given a particular and very interesting account of that Institution, p. 208, *passim*.

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would wish to consult it, you may, I believe, find a copy either in the Dublin, or the College Library.

If you do not mean to reprint your Miscellany very soon, perhaps you would think it right to print a supplementary sheet, containing the number in the Spectator, which I have pointed out, and a reference to the Tale of Bandello. You are, I believe, the first who has attempted to trace this story to its source.

You'll observe in the note to which I have directed your attention, that in line 14 'was' should have been 'were;' it was certainly so written; but this is one of the numerous typographical errors occasioned by my distance from the press. I envy you the correctness of your work. The literary character of an author often suffers from the carelessness of his printer.

I presume you know that we are indebted to the Leonora of Bürger for Dr. Aikin's beautiful Tale of Arthur and Matilda.

My charming friend, Mrs. Magan, I hope is well; have the goodness to make my best compliments acceptable to her, and to Mr. E. A. Whyte, &c. and believe me to be,

Dear Sir! very sincerely, &c.

*St. Valeri, Bray,
14th May, 1800.*

JOSEPH COOPER WALKER.

P. S. Mr. Isaac Reed of London has commissioned me to send him a copy of your Miscellany: I have gotten one, which I shall forward in the course of a few days.

PURSUANT to the intimation of my valuable and highly esteemed friend, I now add the story of the *Mysterious Mother*,

Mother, from the 9th volume of the Spectator, p. 237.* It is given by the conductor of that work, as an answer to a letter preceding, dated Friday, July 11th, 1715, with a few prefatory lines by way of introduction. It runs thus:

“ I know of no better way of complying with my brother guardian’s desires, than in setting down the following history delivered to us among the writings of Mr. *Perkins*.”

‘ A gentlewoman of great note, being left a widow, had
 ‘ her son trained up in her house, who now being come to an
 ‘ age of maturity, grew up, as in stature, so in wanton de-
 ‘ fires, earnestly soliciting her chambermaid to comply with
 ‘ his inclinations; she had the grace not only to repel his of-
 ‘ fers, but wearied out with his wicked importunities, to
 ‘ complain to her mistress, of her young master’s irregulari-
 ‘ ties in behaviour towards her: the mother, out of a pur-
 ‘ pose to repress this wild humour in her son, bids the
 ‘ maid, out of a seeming compliance, make appointment the
 ‘ night following with him, and that she would change
 ‘ beds with the maid, and task the gentleman to some pur-
 ‘ pose. This being done in pursuance to her orders: The
 ‘ Devil tempted the mother; and, terrible as it is to hear,
 ‘ instead of chastising him, she suffered herself to be em-
 ‘ braced, and by him conceived a daughter. Finding herself
 ‘ grow big, weighed down with inward shame, to hinder it
 ‘ from appearing she secretly retired to a distant part of
 ‘ the country, and left the child there to be educated with
 ‘ all care and secrecy. In some years she thought proper to
 ‘ bring

* The seventh edition, Dublin, printed by Samuel Powell, 1735, the first number and consequently the first of publication, bears date Monday, Jan. 3d, 1715; but though the volume has gone through so many editions in both kingdoms, under the name of the Spectator, it is by no means of a piece with the other volumes of that admired periodical work, and certainly exhibits no traces of the pen of Addison, Steele, or any other of the elegant writers concerned in the eight volumes preceding, of which it was puffed off as a continuation.

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‘ bring home the concealed infant as a kinswoman, and
 ‘ treated her like the child of a friend. The young virgin
 ‘ grew up to such a degree of comeliness in person and be-
 ‘ haviour, that the son, still a single man, and now of about
 ‘ one or two and thirty, fell passionately in love with her,
 ‘ and in short, ignorantly married his own daughter. They
 ‘ lived together very lovingly and comfortably, and were the
 ‘ parents of many children. But the mother who knew it
 ‘ all, had, as it were, a whole hell in her bosom; stung one
 ‘ day more than ordinary with remorse, and bitterly gnawed
 ‘ with the worm of conscience, she flew to the learned
 ‘ Divine who wrote this story, and was an eminent casuist,
 ‘ for relief, and asked the good man’s advice, whether she
 ‘ should not put an end to that course of sin, by revealing the
 ‘ matter: the Divine was of opinion, that as they lived in-
 ‘ nocently in their ignorance, she should repent in secret and
 ‘ conceal the business.

Spec. vol. 9, No. 688.

The Note referred to in Mr. WALKER’S Letter, runs thus :

“ Having been induced to dilate, perhaps impertinently,
 upon the *Mysterious Mother*, I shall take this occasion to ob-
 serve, that the fable upon which this inimitable Tragedy is
 built, is minutely detailed by Bandello, (*Nov.* 35, *part* ii.)
 who heard it related by the Queen of Navarre to his patron-
 ess, Gostanza Rangona e Fregosa. Bandello’s Novel is thus
 intitled: *Un Gentiluomo Navarrese sposa una che era sua*
forella e figliuola, non lo sapendo.” This story also appears
 amongst the *Tales of the Queen of Navarre*; but whether it
 was first given to the public by Bandello, or by her Majesty,
 I cannot determine. Le prime tre parte delle *Novelle del*
Bandello, were published at Lucca 1554, and the earliest
 edition

edition of L'Heptameron of the Queen, mentioned by De Bure, (*Bibl. Instr.* tom. ii. p. 94, *Par.* 1765) is that of Paris, 1560; but as the title-page of this edition adds "remis en ordre par Claude Gruget," there was probably an earlier."

Hist. Mem. on Ital. Trag. p. 272, 3, 4to Lond. 1799.

In the Monthly Review, referred to, p. 157, we find mentioned a pamphlet [Lond. Cooper, 1751,] containing a relation of this extravagant tale, reprobated in pretty strong terms; but it is plain the literary inquisitors of those days were ignorant of its previous existence. Their account runs as follows:

"As this narrative appears to us as a piece of fiction, we shall say nothing more of it, than that the story is laid in the time of Oliver Cromwell, and that the publication of cases of this sort ought never to be encouraged, even if proved to be fact, as the knowledge of such unnatural, and (happily) uncommon crimes cannot possibly be attended with any good consequences: as examples, they will probably never deter others; but may inspire people with thoughts of such practices as otherwise might never have entered their imaginations."

Lord Orford's *Mysterious Mother*, the offspring of this extravagant Tale, made its public appearance in print, A. D. 1781, and though never exhibited in London, found its way in good time to the Irish stage. The writer of the present article some twenty years before attempted a Tragedy on the same subject; a juvenile essay, which, scarcely finished, was committed to the flames; (v. p. 103) but this we may conclude was not its first appearance in that character. This, or a story nearly a-kin, had furnished business for the Tragic Muse so early as the year 1640, if not earlier. Tinctured however strongly with the marvelous, it marvelously crept into credit, and was on all hands industriously circulated; a decided argument of its falsity. Calumny or imputation of guilt seldom wants abettors; but to shew the frailty of our confidence in the retailers of scandal, even when from their own personal
knowledge

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knowledge they take upon them to vouch for the facts, we need only sum up the evidence in the case before us.

The Right Honourable Dramatist mentions the subject of his piece as a positive fact, that occurred in the reign of King WILLIAM, and, as by circumstances it appears, in the diocese of CANTERBURY, imparted by the unfortunate Culprit herself to the Archbishop, TILLOTSON.

The Author of the pamphlet brought forward by the Reviewers, asserts it to have happened in the North of SCOTLAND in CROMWELL's time; and that he was in habits of personal intimacy with the parties; some of whose descendants were living, near the scene of action, as the author's son assures us, A.D. 1751, when he committed the narrative to press.

A German Author, whose name and addition have escaped me, records it as an event well known to have happened at PRAGUE, in a family of his own particular acquaintance there; all natives of BOHEMIA.

The ninth volume of the Spectator gives it as an undeniable fact, related in the works of the Rev. Mr. PERKINS, from the guilty mother's own mouth, who had applied to that pious and eminent casuist for spiritual consolation.

Bandello, who has left the story written in choice Italian, deriving his knowledge of it from her Majesty of NAVARRE, ascribes the unfortunate encounter to a gentleman of that country. Bandello's account appeared A.D. 1554.

The Queen herself, we are informed, lays the scene of it as a true story in LANGUEDOC, in the reign of LOUIS XI. of FRANCE.

Bishop Taylor in his great work called *Ductor Dubitantium*, on the authority of Comitulus, a Roman Civilian, states it "as a strange and rare case happening at VENICE." The Bishop's book, a thick folio, was published A.D. 1659.

The works of Comitulus, who probably was the original reporter, and gives it, one would rather suppose, as a fiction of law, I am not conversant in; but I well recollect to have heard, when a boy, a similar story told of an IRISH family, of consequence, in one of the provinces; with this difference, that it was his Nurse by whom the amorous young Spark had a daughter, whom it was his misfortune afterwards to marry; and a gentleman was actually pointed out to me in the streets of Dublin as a lineal descendant of theirs.

Is there a court in Europe that, under such circumstances, would not dismiss the cause?



P. S. Lord Orford, Mr. Walker properly observes, deeply regretted the choice of his subject, and the Reviewers are certainly right, "the publication of cases of this sort ought never to be encouraged, even if proved to be fact." But in tracing them to their source, if we can prove them to be false, it is surely worth the trial; for it not only affords a lesson to credulity, but in a great measure deprives them of their sting. The reasons for proscribing the *Mysterious Mother*, will equally affect the story of Oedipus, Phædra and Hippolitus, Cæmus and Byblis, *cum multis aliis*, not only to the suppression of many of our modern Plays, but to the utter exclusion of Ovid, and a majority of both the Greek and Roman Authors from our Schools, who with all their boasted excellencies, not only incorporate vice, but sanction the commission of it, by the example and practice of their Gods. Scraps of morality, and sententious observations are indeed to be picked up thinly scattered in their voluminous pages. Wisdom and wit are little seen but folly at full length, as was said of the picture of Beau Nash between the bust of Newton and Pope, and we are to rely on the thoughtless inattention, in this case happily characteristic, of youth to preserve their warm and susceptible imaginations from sucking in the poison. Plato, himself poetical, banished Homer from his Republic; more justly upon this system might Virgil be banished from our seminaries of education. This is free language, and I well know to what strictures I expose myself with the bigots to antiquity in the use of it. Bigots to antiquity! this is not an age of bigotry; well then my charter to freedom of speech is on equality with theirs. How many petit-maitre philosophers, affectedly squeamish and prudishly severe, if in a book of religious description they peradventure stumble upon any word or expression which their depraved fancies can torture into a meaning never meant, will reprobate it in toto, and without benefit of clergy devote it to the pit: yet in the same instant can swallow and quietly digest "*Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin.*" . . . 'Yes, Sir! but you know how that is accounted for.' I know it is accounted for very lamely, in a way that does no honour to the

writer,

writer, if possible making the matter worse: I know it is accounted for in a way that the Ancients themselves did not account for it. Juvenal, as well as Martial, who from proximity of time, as well as local residence, had the best opportunities of knowing, take the words in their plain meaning, in the obvious sense which the tenour of other parts of his writings do not discountenance: . . . Juvenal writes,

Nam si Virgilio puer, et tolerabile desit

Hospitium, caderent omnes à crinibus hydri:

Bayle, and some of your modern scholiasts, by their ingenuity and cleverness, vainly thinking to do away the stigma, explain it in a way that, to the abomination of the crime, superadds the opprobrium of panderism.

A prudent Tutor, while he admires the beauties of the Poet, should be convinced, that unrestricted, no reading more improper could be permitted to boys; many of the passages can only tend to excite ideas the worst calculated for a human breast; ever thing is so artfully and pointedly insinuated, the most unprincipled libertine could scarce wish a choicer vade mecum, or exercise more address in the ways of seduction; too frequently has it given the first alarm to the sleeping passions, and inculcated the rudiments of the most detestable vice; yet these are the books recommended for study and improvement. Are such things fit for the inspection of youth, who are to be Husbands and Fathers, perhaps LEGISLATORS? Are they not rather fit, by nocturnal skulkers in obscure corners and blind alleys to be read in the brothels of Sodom. Happily the English language affords no parallels by way of illustration; knew I of such, I should not choose to risk burning my own fingers by pointing them out. Some of our Readers may know that the preceding lines are but a modest parody upon a notorious paragraph of one of our pancratical Illuminati. Those who are innocent of the knowledge, may learn from a genius not less meritoriously enlightened:

—— Where ignorance is bliss

'Tis folly to be wise.

Gray. *Dist. Prosp. Eton Coll.*



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THOMAS SHERIDAN.”

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1800.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Introductory Essay on the ART OF READING and SPEAKING in PUBLIC, is part of the intended Publication alluded to by Mrs. SHERIDAN, in one of that Lady's Letters, annexed to our REMARKS ON BOSWELL, &c.* addressed to my Father, Feb. 26th, 1761, and was very soon after put to press; but, for what reason I am not informed, it was never since permitted to see the light. I lately discovered the whole impression in a closet, tied up, just as it came from the Printer's; and, having carefully perused it, requested the Author's permission to make it public. He hesitated, and seemed not at all disposed to consent. Conceiving, in the lapse of years, it might have been worn out of his memory, I begged of him to read it: then, says he, it will assuredly be condemned to the snuffshop; but if you really think it will be of use, and that in 1799 I shall not be held responsible for the errors and inadvertencies of 1759, for in that year it was written, I leave it to yourself. He was manifestly aware of the difficulties he had to encounter, and not a little diffident of his own execution; for in the first instance, he submitted the
manuscript

* Lately published, together with a CRITIQUE ON BURGHES'S LEONORA, and other TRACTS, on curious and interesting subjects.

manuscript to the examination of several of his most learned and judicious friends, who, however sanguine he might appear for the honour and advantage of his profession, did not damp the ardour of his pursuits with disapprobation. One of them particularly, in whom he most justly confided, on returning the copy, accompanied it with the following encouraging Letter :

TO SAMUEL WHYTE, Esq.

DEAR SIR !

HAVING ended my Remarks, which it required close examination and repeated perusal, to make so numerous, I must recall to your mind, a reflection, which I communicated to you as it occurred to me, in the last Letter I wrote you on the subject of the Elegy, and which now strikes me with redoubled force—‘ That neither as an Author nor a Critic am I formed for you,’ . . . When you acted the part of my Critic, I easily observed that you were dissatisfied with my production, because you could not bring it to a perfection, that my productions would never admit of ; but, which you, as was natural, had full in your idea : and, now as my Author, I find that while I nibble at letters, words, phrases and definitions, there is an insight into the principles of language, an extent of reading and experience, a penetration into, and observation of things relative to your profession, in short an acquaintance with the human faculties

ties and disposition, that to follow, as far as you could lead, would be worth a thousand such criticisms. I must beg, therefore, that hereafter you will not expose my own littleness to my view, by imposing on me a task, like this, to which I am so unequal. On every occasion within my compass, I shall be happy to prove myself,

DEAR SIR,

Your sincere friend,

and humble servant,

R— N—

Whether the writer of the preceding Letter was too partial to his friend's performance or not, is now submitted to the intelligent and candid reader, and should it in some respects fail of giving entire satisfaction, it will at least prove the Author's assiduity, and that at so early a period of his life, he spared no pains to qualify himself for the due discharge of the important Task he had undertaken, that of the Education of Youth.

A Third and Fourth Part was intended by way of Praxis and illustration of the Theory advanced; but the necessity of that, has, in a great measure, been superseded by subsequent publications; too well known, to need any recommendation on the present occasion, from the EDITOR,

MONDAY,
MAY 5, 1800.

EDW. ATHENRY WHYTE.

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by placing the accent over the vowel or the consonant of the accented syllable according to its seat, the proper pronunciation of the words is also pointed out.

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ERRATA.

- P. 16, l. 31, For exemplified in eight words; ~~with~~ exemplified in about eight or ten lines.
- 32, For eight times so many lines, *r.* eight times that number.
- 95, l. 24, For *v* substitute *z*.
- 116, l. 36, For Iapan *r.* Japan.
- 121, Note, For Euridice, *r.* Eurydice.

PROSPECTUS.

THE ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND CLASSIC-SCHOOL, DUBLIN, GRAFTON-STREET, No. 75.

EDUCATION in all its most useful and ornamental branches, Theoretical and Practical, conducted upon Academic Principles, with a view to complete the Gentleman and Man of Business, whether his destination be to the Senate, the Pulpit or the Bar; including every requisite qualification for the Counting-house and Mercantile Departments, in the most extensive sense, with due attention to the Culture of the intellectual Faculties and all the Moral Virtues; the whole calculated to forward and support the great ends of Social Intercourse, and to unite the rational Christian, the good Subject, and the intelligent, useful and happy Man.

Also, Youth boarded, and carefully provided, with all suitable Accommodations, wherein Neatness, Health, and Mental Improvement, are attentively consulted, by the AUTHOR,

SAMUEL WHYTE,

And the EDITOR, his Son,

EDWARD-ATHENRY WHYTE.

N. B. The practical branches, *Writing, Arithmetic and Book-keeping*, &c. indispensibly necessary in every station of life, are particularly attended to, by the Principals themselves, and taught in a superiour style, of which the young Students in the Classic Department, or intended for the University, have uniformly the advantage; and to those intended for Holy Orders, the proper manner of delivering the Church Service is also pointed out and regularly inculcated, together with every requisite article of instruction and preparation for a decent, animated and effectual discharge of the several duties of their sacred function.

Also, in addition to the daily routine of business described, Mr. E.-A. WHYTE having collected a Philosophical Apparatus (allowed to surpass any thing of the kind yet seen in this country) continues to read (*once a Year*) a COURSE OF LECTURES, adapted to the Capacities of Youth, which cannot fail to open their Understandings, and greatly contribute to, and facilitate their progress in every other branch of learning: ———
Advantages not in any other mode of institution to be procured!



AN
ESSAY
ON THE ART OF
READING,
AND
SPEAKING,
IN
PUBLIC.

‘ **T**HAT a general inability to read, or speak, with
‘ propriety and grace, in public, runs through the
‘ natives of the British dominions, is acknowledged;
‘ it shews itself in our Senates, and Churches, on the Bench,
‘ and at the Bar.

‘ That Divine Service, in general, is not performed with
‘ that solemnity, distinctness, and propriety, which the nature
‘ of such service demands; nor discourses delivered from the
‘ pulpit, with such powers of persuasive or forcible elocution,
‘ as can make them produce their intended effects, is also ge-
‘ nerally allowed.’

With these pointed and judicious remarks, adopted from the
Rev. Dr. *Obins*’s letter, recommending the study of English,
&c. the writer of that valuable work, entitled *British Education*,

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opens his lectures on elocution; to which he subjoins the following, equally pertinent, and worthy of our most serious regard.

‘ In short, that good public reading, or speaking, is one of
 ‘ the rarest qualities to be found, in a country, where reading
 ‘ and speaking in public are more generally used, than in any
 ‘ other in the world; where the doing them well is a matter of
 ‘ the utmost importance to the state, and to society; and where
 ‘ promotion, or honour, to individuals, is sure to attend even a
 ‘ moderate share of merit in those points, is a truth which cannot be denied.’

Notwithstanding this ingenious authour has laboured these points, for a series of years, with acknowledged ability and unwearied application; notwithstanding the matters, here insisted upon, are indeed obvious and self-evident, hitherto no perceptible effect has been produced in the state of elocution among us. His public exhibitions were inadequate to the end; and his writings, ‘ Caviare to the general,’ have fallen into few hands; and fewer still have been disposed, or duly prepared, to accompany him through all the steps of an argument, which required capacity and attention, to perceive the justness and utility of his deductions. His object, professedly, was the improvement of his auditors, persons of advanced years; and numerous are they who stand in need of it: but mere speculation will go but a little way, in cases where early and assiduous application is indispensably requisite. Great good sense, resolution, and perseverance fall not to the lot of many. Yet, great good sense, resolution, and perseverance are absolutely necessary to those who would subdue the prejudices of education, and exterminate early bad habits. A false kind of shamefacedness hangs about us, that forbids us to go a second time to school: And, though the proverb wisely assures us, *’Tis never too late to learn*, vanity stands in the gap, and will not suffer us to submit to the humiliating task. To be sensible of our deficiencies, is itself a considerable part of knowledge; and, to avail ourselves of every opportunity of improvement, is the only mean of arriving at the summit. But, waving all farther animadversions on this head, for the present, the attempt now in contemplation is upon a more practical principle, calculated for the rising generation; not, however, without particular respect to the advantage of mature years, and more enlarged understanding.

It is of more importance to a subject of Great Britain, to be able to read English well, than to be able to read any other language; yet not only such as are taught modern languages, but the

the far greater number of those who receive a learned education, read every language they are acquainted with, better than the language of their own country. Latin, Greek, and French * are generally read correctly at sight; English, scarcely ever; for living testimony of which, we need only pay a visit to any of our universities. There we may find numbers, who could pronounce Virgil and Homer throughout, with perfect ease, certainty and precision, utterly incapable of reading, or writing two sentences, with tolerable propriety, in their mother-tongue. The reason is, those languages are carefully studied, and taught by rule; our own is picked up at random, and neglected; and, so very different † and unfriendly are they in all respects to ours, that, far from being necessary, as too implicitly and generally presumed, the labour and application bestowed upon them is demonstrably injurious to the English, and the chief cause of its present fluctuating and undetermined state, as education has been hitherto conducted.

While there are strong appearances of public spirit, in many things, which of late years have been set on foot among us, it is matter of surprize, that we are not more attentive to a business of such universal consequence. Either its usefulness is not sufficiently considered, or the methods of arriving at it not commonly known. Is there a meeting for business, or an assembly for amusement, where the want of this accomplishment is not immediately perceived? where the particularities of the nursery, the school, or the province, are not continually betraying themselves? But, of all places, the defect is most visible in the House of God, and its consequences most prejudicial; because the very end of meeting, is thereby, most remarkably defeated.

In all countries, where science has made any considerable progress, their language has been a principal object of attention; and, in proportion as that has been cultivated, the arts have advanced towards perfection. Turn to the history of the polished ages of Greece, and Rome; England, with all her boasted advantages and refinements, comparatively considered,

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* One of our modern modishly-bred ladies, boasting of her proficiency in the French tongue, asserted, she understood and spoke it better, than she did English, and, for the truth, appealed to a French lady in company. The Parisian very candidly and sensibly answered, 'I am not, my dear madam, sufficiently acquainted with the English to determine; but I should be ashamed to speak or understand any language *half* so well as my own.'

† So very different, that in most cases the direct reverse of the rules which answer for the Latin idiom is nearly the standard for English.

is but in a state of infancy, and has no right to plead an exception. We find the wisest and best of men, in all ages, and nations, strenuously inculcating this principle, as the sure foundation of their glory, and the grand bulwark of their civil and religious liberties: 'Twere easy to produce an ample list of authorities, to support the fact; but a recent and most remarkable instance, among ourselves, may come more directly to my point.

In the year 1745, when the Earl of Chesterfield was our chief governour, the weight of public business in a new employment, and in the midst of a dangerous rebellion, did not prevent that illustrious nobleman from casting his thoughts upon the education of our youth. In various conversations with some of the heads of our university, he took notice of the general neglect of a proper cultivation of the English language in the schools, and colleges of England, as well as those of this kingdom; declared his readiness to encourage every thing which might tend to promote the writing and reading of it, with correctness; and, in testimony of his earnestness in the cause, proposed a premium of thirty guineas, for the best speech, to be written and pronounced in English, the King's next birth-day. This was designed only to give a beginning, and lay the foundation of some more lasting institution; which he warmly recommended to the Provost and Senior Fellows: They concurred in the usefulness of the design, and agreed that a lecture should be established for the purpose. A statute was accordingly drawn up, and laid before them; and, in several subsequent meetings and consultations, many excellent resolutions were entered into; and all preparatory dispositions duly regulated, and finally determined upon. What a pity it was not carried into execution! Here they stopped: And, I am authorized to say, the difficulty of finding persons able, as well as willing, to undertake the care of this lecture, was the principal reason, why no farther progress was made in the affair. This at once proves the great importance, and, of course, the necessity of such an institution. If any doubts should arise, as to the difficulty of the thing, it will appear the less surprizing, when it is considered that the qualifications necessary to such a lecturer, as hereafter described, are not very common.

After all, had the design taken effect, it was but a provisional expedient. The proper place for commencing these studies is at school; for, certain it is, the principles of elocution, and the rules of English Grammar, cannot be too soon inculcated;

culcated ; Children ought to be trained in them, from their very first rudiments, when the pliant organs are easily formed to the pronounciation of any sounds ; and before prejudice or evil habits shall have taken root. Besides, as but the smaller number of the youth of these nations, receive a collegiate education, the rest, to whom it would be no less useful and ornamental, must be entirely excluded from the benefits of such an institution.

What is true of most of the improvements which are made by study or culture, is peculiarly so of the Art of Public Speaking. If there be not a foundation laid for it in the early part of life, there is no reasonable ground of expectation that any degree of excellence therein, should ever be attained. The impediments, in case of adults, already hinted at, we shall investigate hereafter : Let it suffice at present to observe, that as good speaking depends upon, and consists in, practice more than theory (tho' a well established theory is not only desirable but indispensably necessary) it requires the earlier initiation, that practice may have its full scope, before the time of life arrives, in which there may be occasion for public exhibition. Mankind must speak from the beginning, therefore ought, from the beginning, to be taught to speak properly ; otherwise they will inevitably contract habits of speaking improperly ; and whoever knows the difficulty of breaking through bad habits, will avoid that labour by prevention. There is a wide difference between speaking and writing. Some, nay most of mankind, are never to be writers ; all are speakers. Young persons ought not to be put upon writing, from their own funds I mean, till they have furnished their minds with thoughts, that is, till they have acquired funds ; but they cannot be kept from speaking.

A question may be put, what classes of children are the proper objects of such a course ? The answer is ready. It is not partially confined to order or degree. Like our constitution, diffusing blessings all around, it breathes the spirit of freedom ; respects the general community, and with a fostering arm embraces, male and *female*, all its branches. It is peculiarly adapted to the purposes of children of rank, entitled to sit in either House of parliament ; and equally calculated to answer the important ends of those who would effectually discharge the duties of their calling, or are desirous to shine in the pulpit, on the bench, or at the bar. The country gentleman, who wishes to support an interest, and maintain an influence

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in his county; the merchant, in the assemblies of his commercial brethren; and even those of inferior note, in their corporate capacities, must soon perceive the advantages of reading and speaking their mother tongue with propriety and address. It is an allowed maxim, that, upon all subjects, good reading is the best comment. What an immense addition both of pleasure and profit must the student in his closet receive, thus enabled to animate and improve the noblest sentiments of his most favourite authors, with a spirited and suitable delivery! What advantages as a writer may he not hence derive, thus taught to form his periods; to polish his style; and to transfuse into his compositions, all the copiousness, fluency, energy, and persuasive graces of living speech! The merely domestic man, supposing him entirely unambitious of a literary character; supposing him to have no view to the senate, the pulpit, or the bar, will yet find his account in bestowing some pains in acquiring a degree of mastery in his native tongue; It will establish his consequence among his friends, and companions; and, within the circle of his influence, as well as in his own immediate family, and domestic retirements, it will enable him more effectually to promote the interests of religion, morality, and good neighbourhood. A boy may turn out an extraordinary penman, an excellent accountant, a sublime mathematician, and withal a very bad man. Those branches of science, however useful, contribute nothing to the improvement of morals. In the study of elocution, the case is far otherwise. The examples for practice, selected from the most approved authors, consequently include an extensive field of instruction, upon a variety of the most improving and interesting topics, conveyed in the most elegant and forcible language; and, that the pronunciation and manner of delivery may perfectly accord, every sentiment, every expression, every word, must be carefully analyzed, and sedulously examined. Nothing here can be admitted implicitly, or in gross. Every circumstance of matter, tendency, time, place and connection of the whole, and all its parts, must be comprehended, and thoroughly digested by the young declaimer. They must be reiterated, and impressed upon his mind, till his whole soul, warmed into action, and pregnant with its effects, pours them forth, like Pallas from the head of Jove, completely armed with every grace, and every power of genuine irresistible eloquence. Hence his feelings are regulated; his dispositions corrected; and all his reasoning faculties duly exercised and improved. The most exalted virtues,

prudence,

prudence, moderation, self-denial, humanity, justice, piety, equity, patience, duty to parents, deference to superiours, the love of his country, and a reverence to her laws, are the constant theme of his contemplation. Vice is rendered odious; the passions destructive to himself, or hurtful to others, painted in their native deformity; and artifice and villany, stripped of their mask, he is taught to detest and to avoid. Good principles come recommended under the idea of pleasure and amusement, and the practice of them becomes familiar, and grows into habit. Accustomed to speak before numbers, he is always self-possessed, and consequently his deportment orderly, consistent and free. He acquires confidence without effrontery; dignity without pride; and, full of the energies of virtue, is never afraid to enter the lists in her defence: thus he supports her interest with fortitude and success. Does not this exhibit a system of the most delightful and effective morality? can it be denied, that a boy, educated upon these principles, with a proportional share of the gifts of nature, must become a more useful member of society, than is possible in the common methods? His heart will be humanized; his understanding opened; his sentiments enlarged; his morals improved: he must be a more disinterested friend; a more rational companion; a more confirmed christian; a better man; in a word, more completely qualified to discharge every civil and social duty of life in whatever station.

Writing, arithmetic, and mathematics, are doubtless useful and absolutely necessary instruments; but an instrument the most perfect in its kind, without a head to apply, taste to direct, and an improved well regulated heart to superintend all, is of little intrinsic value. Our mechanics are merely handicraftsmen; they can execute indeed; but are obliged for taste and design to nations more studious of cultivating their mental faculties. To instance, among multitudes, but in a single article. Our silk manufacture. How much superiour to the French in quality! in fancy how shamefully inferiour! What sums does it annually cost the nation, and what artifices are exerted to procure their patterns! bewitching inducements to clandestine importation! This is a striking monument of our futility and neglect; and in all works of elegance and fancy, the proofs of our insufficiency are proportionally observable. For want of proper education to form our judgement, as has been remarked, we impose upon ourselves extraneous conceptions, and an incongruity of taste, which often hurry us to needless and preposterous expence, and make us a bye-word among the nations. But will these
evils

evils be remedied by learning to read? No, not merely by learning to read: but by laying a foundation there, and cultivating our mother-tongue, as they have wisely set us the example, it will induce a general spirit of emulation; divest us of a certain clumsiness and barbarity of idea; and diffuse a general good taste throughout the land. This, with our executive abilities, would soon teach us to excell our arrogant vain-glorious masters, and secure to us the superiority in arts as well as arms.

But setting aside all motives of national benefit (too often prostituted in these our days) if entertainment alone were the object, what could be more delightful than to hear the beautiful and sublime sentiments of a Milton, a Shakespear, a Dryden, a Pope, a Tillotson, a Young, an Addison, a Shenstone, or a Mason, flowing with judicious, spirited, harmonious, expressive and happy propriety, from the charming lips of a Townshend, a Millington, a Birmingham, a Gardiner, a Nevill, a Montgomery, a Boyd, a Nugent, an O'Reilly or a Beresford? what more rational? what could stand in competition? These conspicuous names, with many others in the female world, here justly claim distinction, and shew how much even beauty may be enhanced and improved by the addition of unaffected good sense, and a modest cultivated understanding. 'The Romans, notwithstanding the great ease and certainty with which the art of reading and repeating their poets might be acquired, took uncommon pains to arrive at the utmost accuracy in that respect. To the most critical knowledge of the rules, constant practice was added. They had persons regularly trained, to be able to perform it with exactness and grace, as much as our fingers now are in music; and reciting fine passages out of Virgil, and their other excellent poets, was a chief part of their entertainment, in the same manner that singing select airs of Handel, or playing favourite solos of Geminiani, are with us.'* Cicero, that prince of philosophers and real patriots, as well as of orators, explicitly testifies, that address in speaking is highly ornamental, as well as useful, even in private life.† The limbs are parts of the body much less noble than the tongue; yet no gentleman grudges a considerable expence of time and money, to have his son taught to use them properly; which is indisputably

* See *British Education*, where, in a style and manner happily adapted to the subject, the authour of that judicious performance has endeavoured to open the eyes of his countrymen, and must give ample satisfaction, upon this and many other very interesting points, to all who attentively peruse his work.

† Cicero de Oratore, Lib. I. p. 83.

putably right, and is there no attention to be paid to the use of the tongue, the glory of man?

Supposing a person to be ever so sincere and zealous a lover of virtue and of his country, without a competent skill and address in speaking, he can only sit still, and see them wronged; for, destitute of the requisite qualifications, how shall he attempt to prevent or redress the evil? Let an artful and eloquent statesman harangue the House upon a point of the utmost consequence to the public, he has it greatly in his power to mislead the judgement of the members. And he, who sees through the delusion, if he be awkward in delivering himself, can do nothing to hinder the ruinous schemes proposed by the other, from being carried into execution, but give his simple negative against them, without so much as explaining to the House his reasons for so doing. The case is the same in other smaller assemblies and meetings, in which volubility of tongue, and steadiness of countenance, often prevail against solid reasons, and most important considerations.

These are truths, so manifest in themselves, that the bare mention of them, one would think, should flash conviction upon every hearer; but it is the weakness of many to shut their eyes to reason, unless backed by authority; and to deny their assent to schemes of the most glaring utility, unless they have precedent to support them. In this respect also satisfaction is at hand. History, almost in every page, furnishes indisputable testimony to the purpose; experience gives daily proof of the same; but the following obvious and self-evident positions, duly attended to, must clear up every difficulty, and silence even scepticism itself.

“That the subjects of Britain are the only civilized people of ancient or modern times, who neglected to cultivate their language, or to methodize it in such a way, as that the knowledge of it might be regularly acquired, is a proposition no less strange than true.”

“That the English are the only free nation recorded in history, possessed of all the advantages of literature, who never studied the art of elocution, or formed any institutions, whereby they, who were most interested in the cultivation of that art; they, whose professions necessarily call upon them to speak in public, might be instructed to acquit themselves properly on such occasions, and be enabled to deliver their sentiments with propriety and grace, is also a point as true as it is strange.”

“These neglects are the more astonishing, because, upon examination, it will appear, that there neither is, nor ever was a
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nation upon earth, to the flourishing state of whose constitution and government, such studies were so absolutely necessary. Since it must be obvious to the slightest inquirer, that the support of our establishment, both ecclesiastical and civil, in their due vigour, must, in a great measure, depend upon the powers of elocution, in public debates, or other oratorical performances, displayed in the pulpit, the senate-house, or at the bar."

" But to leave the public interests out of the question; is it not amazing, that these studies have never been established here, even upon selfish principles, which, in all other cases, seldom fail of having their due force? since it can be shewn, that there never was a state, wherein so many individuals were so necessarily and deeply concerned in the prosecution of those studies; or where it was the interest, as well as duty, of such numbers, to display the powers of oratory in their native language."

" There is not a single point, in which the study of oratory was necessary to the ancients, wherein it is not equally so to us; nor was there any incitement to the knowledge and practice of that art, whether of pleasure, profit, or honour, which with us is not of equal strength."

" We, as well as the ancients, have councils, senates, and assemblies of the people, whose deliberations and debates turn upon matters of as much moment; where oratory has fields as ample, in which it may exert all its various powers; and where the rewards and honours, attendant on eloquence, are equal. ' If we look into the history of England, for more than a century past, if we appeal to what daily passes within our own observation, we shall find, that most persons have made their way to the head of affairs, and got into the highest employments, not on account of birth or fortune, but by being, what is commonly called, good speakers.' The instances of bad speakers rising to eminent stations in the government are rare."

" Nor is oratory less necessary to us at the bar, than it was to the ancients; nor are the rewards of profit, fame, and preferment less attendant on it there; as has been experienced by all in that profession, who took pains to improve their talents in that way."

" But there is one point, a most momentous one, in which oratory is essentially necessary to us, but was not in the least so to the ancients. The article I mean, is of the utmost importance to us; ~~It is~~ the basis of our government, and pillar of our state. It is the vivifying principle, the soul of
our

our constitution, without which it cannot subsist; I mean RELIGION."

' As the Religion of the ancients consisted chiefly of rites and ceremonies, it could derive no assistance from oratory; but there is not the smallest branch of ours, which can be well executed, without skill in speaking, and the more important parts, calculated to answer the great ends, evidently require the whole oratorical powers.'

" In short, the difference between the ancients and us, arises from one obvious cause. In the course of education, we have pursued most of the studies which they did; but some we have wholly omitted. In all the *sciences* to which we *have* applied, we have far outdone them; and if they still excel us in many of the *arts*, it is either because we have wholly neglected their cultivation, or, where we have made the attempt, we have taken a wrong course. The chief points in which they differed from us, were the study of their native language and oratory. And it can be indisputably shewn, that they possessed no advantages over us, but what arose, either immediately or consequentially from their knowledge, skill, and practice in grammar, rhetoric, and oratory."

But it is a pretty current observation, that the English language is unfit for the purposes of oratory, and but indifferently adapted to the higher and more sublime species of poetry; nay, some go farther, and pretend to dispute its very existence as a language. They call it a *tongue*; a Babel of all the different languages spoken upon earth; a wild, untowardly Scyon, grafted upon a rude and barbarous stock; they admit indeed, that this may be in some sort characteristic of all the modern tongues; yet as they have been assiduously cultivated, and are more nearly a-kin to the mother-language, they boast eminent advantages over ours. It is insisted upon, that we cannot translate any original work from any other language, without great circumlocution. That the English abounds in monosyllables, in which the number of consonants are out of all proportion to that of the vowels; and that the roughest and most discordant consonants are often huddled together in the same syllable. That it is greatly deficient in point of diphthongs. That it wants that happy inflection of nouns and verbs, which give such variety and majesty to the Greek and Latin, by the change of termination, and increase of Polysyllables: That consequently it cannot have that inversion and power of transposition, those great sources of harmony in style, by the freedom which they give of ranging words at will. That it has not the

use of quantity, nor consequently of poetic feet, without which there can be no true numbers. It has been from the beginning left wholly to chance, and has been of course in a continual state of fluctuation; and that no pains have ever been taken to regulate, refine or ascertain it. In short, that it is not so musical as the Italian, so polished as the French, so courteous as the Spanish, so majestic as the Greek, nor can it ever stand in competition with the Latin.

To answer these strictures analytically, and in detail, is beyond the purpose of this essay; to speak to them in a summary way, is all that can now be attempted; and, even so, formidable as they appear, it is presumed they will be found for the most part erroneous or superficial. It is natural for men to have a predilection in favour of what has cost them much pains and attention; prejudices of education are of all others the most difficult to surmount; and as Greek and Latin are so early recommended to us, and supposed the high road to science and estimation in life, it is no way wonderful so many stand up in their defence. That they are highly deserving of our attention, is not denied; that they are useful as well as ornamental, is also allowed; but if through an enthusiastic fondness for them, or any other language, we learn to despise or neglect our own, we pervert the purpose of learning them, and, spoiled of their virtue, they become worthless and destructive. Let our Anti-anglicans ask themselves, have they a determinate and strictly adequate idea of the real essence and properties of language? have they considered those properties and essentials generally, and in the abstract, and, thence deducing clear and distinct principles, have they sedulously and duly applied them to those languages, of which they pretend to judge? or have they taken up their opinions cursorily by hearsay, and at large? that this last has been for the most part the case, in respect of the English, is evident, as there is not a treatise extant, where the peculiar genius and constitution of our tongue are sifted to the bottom, and its specific difference pointed out.

Were any man hardy enough to attempt to prove, that the English language is not so much encumbered with monosyllables as it appears to be; he would probably be laughed at as a whimsical visionary; yet such a demonstration is within the sphere of good sense and sound reasoning. Accent is the bond which ties syllables together, and forms them into words; and as in our longest words, we have but one prevailing accent, so for every such accent we have a determinate word.* Now the

* See *Lectures on Elocution*, where this Article of Accent, (greatly important to a just delivery) is clearly and satisfactorily treated.

the particles by which we connect and distinguish the relation of words, in the construction of sentences, are in their nature utterly divested of accent, so that in pronunciation, however separately written, they coalesce and incorporate with the principal term, and by such union constitute one aggregate word or polysyllable. Without entering minutely into a philosophic disquisition of this point, we need but consult some of our most esteemed authorities, to illustrate and ascertain the fact: there we shall find a numerous catalogue of words, with their connective particles, used indifferently in a separate or coalescent state; * custom, or necessity not having yet established uniformity in that point. These are so many evidences, at least that the charge brought against our language, as to monosyllables, making the ear and not the eye the judge, is ill founded and unjust. Hear the sentiments of an ingenious writer on this head; the passage is curious; and as the book is scarce, I shall give it more at large †.

“ The excellence of the English is its simplicity; and if, with
 “ this simplicity, it be capable of conveying the thoughts of
 “ one man to another, on all occasions, with clearness and
 “ precision, the end of language is effectually answered. As
 “ to multiplicity of monosyllables, they are not to be avoided
 “ in any language of so simple construction as the English;
 “ *because the prepositions and signs of the tenses must be kept distinct*
 “ *from the nouns and verbs, that they may be applied with any*
 “ *noun, or with any verb.* But if they were considered as
 “ *united into one word* with the noun or the verb with which
 “ they are placed in construction, such word, as a polysyllable,
 “ would, for the most part, contain as few syllables, as the
 “ correspondent Latin or Greek noun or verb. ‡ Therefore the
 “ complaint

* Thus we write indifferently, can not, or cannot; no body or nobody; an other or another; no thing or nothing; any thing or anything; and occasionally we find, by partition and bipartition; by section and bisection; in action and inaction; in case and incase; in fight and incite; in deed and indeed; in devotion and indevotion; in direct and indirect; in elegant and inelegant; in delicate and indelicate; in justice and injustice; in trust and intrust; to gather and together; with all and withal; also, a way and away; be gone and be-gone; and a thousand others, identically the same, as to accentual pronunciation, though widely different in point of meaning: in this view we may also include our compound words, as cart-rope, ink-horn, house-keeper, &c. &c. in which respect we have an eminent advantage over all modern languages, if not equal to the ancient.

† Speculative Grammar, Quarto, page 281.

‡ Thus *of-a-man* is an expression of the same number of syllables, as *hominis* or *ανθρωπου*, and *may-run* as *currat* or *τρεχει*, which to my ear have no great advantage in point of sound neither, and so of most other instances.

“ complaint of the English being weakened by the auxiliary
 “ verbs, or by any other means, is without foundation; and
 “ if Tacitus, or any other authour, cannot be translated into
 “ English, so short as the original, neither can almost any good
 “ English authour be translated into Latin, so short as the
 “ original. Let any man take a scene of Shakespear, and try
 “ if he can turn it into *Iambic* verses, which shall not exceed
 “ the number of the English verses; and yet every *Iambic* verse
 “ contains twelve syllables, and the English heroic verse con-
 “ tains but ten. Or, without taking so much pains, let the
 “ soliloquy of Cato, just before his death, in Mr. Addison’s
 “ tragedy, be compared with the Latin translation of it in
 “ Number 628, in the eight volume of the Spectator, and it
 “ will appear, that the Latin is at least one-third longer than
 “ the English. Yet this speech is in the character of a Roman,
 “ on a common topic; and so is more nearly in the Roman
 “ way of thinking, than otherwise it would be: and hence it is
 “ more suited to the Latin idiom, than an Englishman’s speech
 “ upon an English subject would be.”

The reason why translations cannot be so short as originals,
 is, because the nouns and verbs of no two languages, perfectly
 suit each other; nor do the allusions, or figures in any two
 languages, exactly correspond; and when this happens, cir-
 cumlocution must necessarily be used in the language into
 which any original is translated. Mr. Addison says, the English
 language sunk under Milton; so would the Greek have sunk
 under Homer, if he had attempted an epic poem on Milton’s
 subject; and if we turn to Shakespear, and several other of
 our classic writers, we may find many set speeches, equal at
 least to any that have descended to us from antiquity. Would
 our public speakers take the pains to arrive at excellence, which
 Demosthenes and Tully did, there is little doubt but the English
 language would shew such excellence as effectually as either the
 Greek or Latin.

That our words seem overloaded with consonants, must be al-
 lowed, if we regard them only as they appear to the eye on paper;
 but the ear acknowledges no more than are consistent with energy
 and expression, when delivered by the tongue of a skilful speaker.
 A spirit of pedantry prevails in our mode of spelling; and,
 from an idle affectation of adhering to etymology,* we retain
 abundance

* For the advantage of foreigners, it is pretended, who may learn our lan-
 guage; ridiculous! were it even so; we squander away a thousand times more
 attention upon theirs, than they bestow upon ours, and yet *they* think it not
 worth while to return the compliment.

abundance of superfluous letters in writing, which would excite laughter, were they heard in discourse. This is one of the main difficulties and discouragements in learning our language. The French and Italians have acted more wisely, and freed themselves from those exotic trammels; but the free-born Britons, in the dress of their words, as well as the decoration of their persons, are afraid to think for themselves, and servilely make their parade in borrowed feathers. Our alphabet, for which we are indebted to the Latins, is very imperfect; a circumstance which however speaks in favour of our language. We have demonstrably nine vowels, and nineteen consonants, in all twenty eight elementary sounds; the Greeks and Latins but twenty two; consequently they could not furnish us with characters to answer those six supernumerary sounds. And, owing to our indolence, or our partiality for those tongues, we have never yet endeavoured to remedy the evil. Diphthongs are incontestably ornamental to a language; our grammarians tell us we have six proper, and, as they call them, nine improper diphthongs, though there is in all these but two, which really come within the description of a diphthong, *oi*, and *ou*; and yet we have in fact twenty four; the Greeks only six †; the French eight; and the Romans ten. Farther, notwithstanding the charge of roughness and discordance, we admit no guttural sounds, which, prevailing in most modern tongues, render them harsh and disagreeable; even the ancient Greek was not wholly free from them, for it is probable they founded their χ Chi gutturally. The letter S, which the French so loudly exclaim against in our language, occurs as frequently in Latin as with us, and far more frequently in our books, from whence they judge, than it meets the ear in our pronunciation, being for the most part softened into the semivowel Z ‡. But how can we reconcile to any delicate and unprejudiced ear, their snuffing grunting nasals, offensively reiterated through every sentence.

Our language is not only capable of poetic measures, as well as the Latin and Greek, but in a much more extensive and superiour degree, if harmony and variety be taken into the estimate. The principles of their versification and ours, are nearly the same; and only differ in the application, and some few circumstances, in which we have indisputably the advantage.

Their hexameters, or heroic measures, were confined to a succession of two movements only, the Dactyle and the Spondee,
equal

† The Greeks have twelve diphthongs, proper and improper; the Romans but five, according to most grammars.

‡ The letter Z, is evidently a semivowel, though not ranked as such by our grammarians.

equal in point of time, limited in quality, and restrained in their application; the verses uniformly terminating in a Spondee preceded by a Dactyle*: so that, altho' they run to the extent of six feet, their utmost range in point of variety, that great source of harmony and expression, consisted in ringing the changes upon two feet, in the four first members of the verse. Our heroic metre, tho' a foot inferiour, as to size, admits of eight several feet, dispersed thro' every part of the verse, under one or two easy metrical restrictions; four feet of two syllables, and four trissyllabic feet, essentially differing both in time and movement, viz.

Disyllabic Feet.

Trissyllabic Feet.

Pyrrhic . . .	o o †	Tribrach . . .	o o o .
Spondee . . .	- -	Amphibrach . .	o - o
Iambic . . .	o -	Anapæst . . .	o o -
Trochee . . .	- o	Dactyle . . .	- o o

With this additional advantage, that we have duplicates of five of the eight, and a power of forming the sixth in no less than four different ways, at the will of the composer: One species of movement of a more melodious tenour, adapted to subjects of a soft and plaintive nature; the other calculated for more spirited and forcible expression.

The genius of the ancient tongues, to which their hexameters were peculiarly adapted, reducing them to the narrow compass of two feet, obliged them, in perpetual rotation, to put forth all their wealth at once; which, however specious and intrinsically beautiful, in works of length, will induce a sameness that cloyes the ear, and renders them tedious and insipid. We, who have a latitude of eight feet, are under no such necessity; we may indulge in a boundless variety; our treasures are inexhaustible, and suited to every occasion. The utmost variation their heroics were capable of, may be exemplified in eight words; 'tis impossible to exhibit ours in eight times so many lines. Nor are syllabic numbers the only articles to be attended to; there are other ingredients, which enter into the composition of our versification, unknown to the ancients, and with which the moderns themselves are very superficially acquainted. The measures and literal utterance of the learned tongues, depended wholly on quantity, inseparably annexed to the syllables of their words, conformably to certain established mechanic laws; so that any persons who

* To this the exceptions are so rare, that I recollect but one in the first *Æneid*, and two in the second, and those terminate in two spondees, and are called spondaic hexameters.

† A breve o is put over a short syllable; a long — over a syllable of a long sound.

who could articulate their words properly, though utter strangers to the sense, could pronounce them with perfect rhythmical propriety; and persons entirely ignorant of the true pronunciation, or manner of sounding their words, may write Latin verse, agreeably to the rules of prosody, harmonious and flowing as the most admired of the Augustan age. Our poetic measures, reducible to no stated *mechanic* rules, depend upon accent, not quantity; though we also have the use of quantity, which, with every other article of measured pronunciation, is regulated by emphasis, and the relative importance of the sense of our words, as they constitute sentences. Hence arises the indispensable necessity of being complete masters of our grammar, and the full import of our words, to form an adequate judgment of our language, or to speak it with elegance and precision, and to display the various rhetorical excellencies, of which it is so eminently susceptible.

The first principles of excellence in any language, are clearness and precision. Whatever counter-acts those first principles, what end soever else calculated to answer, is doubtless a blemish, and proportionally eclipses its perfection. Of this nature proves the boasted power of inversion and transposition in the Latin and Greek, which, though it may contribute something in point of cadence, renders their construction dark and intricate. The ancients, we know, indulged themselves in the use of it, as parents are apt to cherish and fondle the most infirm and sickly of their offspring, to a degree of extravagance; even Cicero himself is severely censured by his countrymen and cotemporaries, for his excessive affectation in this particular. But whoever attentively considers the genius of those tongues, may be convinced, that in the earliest periods of refinement, the ancients were impelled by a motive of necessity to that perplexed arrangement of their words, rather than disposed to it by choice. Their Syntax depended upon the consonancy of final syllables; nor had they any other regularly established mode of marking the relations and dependencies of their words in the structure of sentences. An original and grand defect in the constitution of those tongues, as it is impossible to preserve the due order of such words in grammatical succession, without offending the ear with a perpetual reiteration of the same final sounds.

Now admitting that transposition of words may be a source of beauty in those languages, does it thence follow, they must, for that reason, be more excellent than ours? The want of simplicity

plicity of Syntax, can never be compensated by any acquisition of cadence, or by any other advantages which can be supposed to result from a complex Syntax, such as that of the Latin and Greek. The business of life is not to learn language, therefore that plan of expressing our thoughts, which is the soonest apprehended, is incontestably the best; provided it be precise and sufficiently general. Here the English of all languages, ancient or modern, stands unrivalled. To this effect, let us subjoin what the judicious authour already cited, farther observes.

‘ It must be apparent to any one, the least conversant in Latin and Greek, that the mechanism of those languages depends, in a great measure, on the correspondence of final syllables, to which, while we are reading them, we are compelled to be continually attentive. Now in English, there is no danger of wearying the ear, by a too frequent repetition of similar final sounds; and therefore there is no occasion to embarrass the construction, in order to avoid this inconvenience. Unlimited variety in the beginning and ending of words, is a characteristical property of English. This variety in the beginning of words, arises not only from the original structure of our tongue, but from the inseparable prepositions we use in compounding words, which we have adopted from the French, Latin, Greek, and other languages; and as to variety of the ending of its words, that must be much greater than it can possibly be in the actual construction of any language in which the nouns are declined by cases, and the verbs conjugated by final terminations. For the same terminations of the cases, tenses and persons must be continually recurring in every such language, and produce a sad and wearisome effect upon the ear.’ For this the only remedy is transposition, which we see is productive of consequences no less disagreeable and inconvenient, although of a different nature: yet in spite of all, a smatch * of the old leaven will still remain.

From

* Thus we find

—en quo discordia cives

Produxit *miseros* ! en *queis* *consevimus* *agros* !

— — — — — tibi *que*

Oscilla *ex* *alta* *suspendunt* *mollia* *pinu*.

Hinc *omnis* *largo* *pubescit* *vineæ* *factu* :

VIRGIL.

— me.

From the above premisses, attentively considered, we may partly gather why their prosody and poetic measures are not, in all respects, applicable to our language; and why blank verse, especially upon the classic model, of which we want not instances, however idolized by some, who, Procrustes like, would have every thing conform to their standard, is not by others thought perfectly congenial to the admirable simplicity, and perspicuity of English; and also why rhyme, which is admitted, and esteemed ornamental in ours, and other modern tongues, would be intolerable if attempted in theirs. A distinction founded upon the different genius and constitution of languages, and neither a proof nor a consequence of any superiority of taste possessed, in this instance at least, by the ancients over the moderns; as some writers, perhaps in this respect not wholly unprejudiced, would have us believe.

“ Were our language to be studied and improved to the
 “ pitch of perfection whereof it is capable, it would perhaps
 “ appear, that the qualities of sound, to fit it to all sorts of
 “ poetical compositions, are blended in more lucky propor-
 “ tions, than in any other; and that we have on that account
 “ as great an advantage over the ancients, in point of num-
 “ bers, as the invention and improvement of our musical in-
 “ struments

—metaque fervidis
 Evitata rotis, palmaque nobilis.

HORACE.

Quas cum possideas est violare nefas.
 Non aliter sitiens vicinas Tantalus undas
 Captat, et oppositis abstinet ora cibis.

LONG. MAX.

Spargimur innocuæ succis melioribus Herbæ,
 Percutimurque caput conversæ verberare virgæ.

OVID. MET.

Non Rhodierum, quorum usque ad nostram memoriam——at, aliquot annos,
 continuos ante legem Gabiniam ille populus Romanus cujus usque ad nostram
 memoriam, &c. CICERO : pro lege Manilia, Sect. 18.

——Πολλὰς δ' ἰφθιμὰς, &c.

Ἦν δὲ διὰ μαντοσύνην τὴν——

HOMER.

Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα, θύρας μεσσή——του μὴν ἦν ξυμμαχῶν τοῖς πλεῖστοις,
 καὶ τοῖς σιλαγωγῶσι ἀλκασί, καὶ τοῖς πλοίοις καὶ ὅση ἄλλη——αὐτοῦ δὲ
 ὁ σόλος ὡς χρόνος τε ἴσμενος, καὶ κατ' ἀμφοτέρω.

THUCYDIDIS HIST. VI. 31.

“ instruments have given us, with respect to harmony. But in
 “ both cases, we have failed of the end, by a neglect or abuse
 “ of the means which alone could give us a superiority.”——
 “ We did not know, that amidst all their variety of measures,
 “ in their different species of poetry, there is not one, to
 “ which we either have not, or may not have something ana-
 “ logous in ours, and for the most part more perfect in its
 “ kind.”——“ How few are there capable of perceiving, that
 “ Milton does not exceed Homer and Virgil in any thing so
 “ much as in his numbers? The *Paradise Lost* sufficiently shews
 “ its fitness for Heroic poetry. In the works of Shakespear,
 “ we may easily discover that it is the most proper for tragedy
 “ ever yet made use of. The same also may be seen in some of
 “ his comedies.”——“ Milton’s *Lycidas* affords an example of
 “ its elegiac powers; and the *Cyder* of Philips, of its didactic,
 “ which will be found in the aptitude of its measures to its
 “ matter, superiour to the *Georgics*: nor are we without in-
 “ stances happily adapted to the ease and simplicity of Pastoral.
 “ In the Lyric style of composition, the English can boast of
 “ the most perfect Ode that ever was produced in any language,
 “ in point of variety, harmony, and expression in its numbers.
 “ I mean the Ode on St. Cecilia’s day, by Dryden.”——
 “ Horace has used the heroic measure in his satyrs and epistles,
 “ but with a far less degree of ease and happy familiarity, than
 “ the English is capable of in that sort of writings. Add to
 “ these, its use in a new vein of poetry, and perhaps not one of
 “ the most unpleasant kind, whereof no traces remain in the
 “ writings of antiquity, the grave burlesque, as in the *Splendid*
 “ *Shilling* of Philips.” These pertinent and judicious obser-
 vations are extracted from the second book, of *British Edu-*
cation, chapter the ninth; containing also many other curious
 remarks on the same subject, of which no one, who has the
 interests of education and the English language at heart,
 ought to be ignorant.——In this enumeration, we must not
 forget another species of writing, the humorous burlesque, to
 which it has been successfully applied by Butler, in his *Hudibras*;
 neither should we omit the elegant story-telling vein of Prior.
 From all which we naturally deduce this conclusion, That the
 English is equally well suited to all the various styles of poetry,
 heroic, tragic, comic, pastoral, elegiac and didactic.

We are told, and we seem to take it for orthodox too, that
 our language is unfit for music; but upon what authority?
 We annually cram the pockets of certain Italian emigrants of
 low

low education, and mean parts, except in their vocation, whose performances we extravagantly affect; we entertain them as teachers, and that doctrine they propagate, wherever they gain access. Every language has its difficulties, and appears uncooth to Aliens; ours of course is not without them, and in *their* mangled pronunciation seems dissonant and barbarous indeed; on this they ground their assertion; they can neither write nor speak it intelligibly; are too proud and indolent to give the requisite application, and feeling their deficiency, would gladly shift it from themselves, and fix it upon the language. Our Tramontane *Macaroni* linguists, by a strange kind of contradictory self-delusion, strikingly characteristic of these countries, run headlong into their opinions, and presuming themselves adepts in the continental tongues, have their idioms and phrases perpetually in their mouths, and are incessantly idolizing their imagined beauties; though it is but fair to suppose, that broken French and Italian are at least as incidental to us, as it is to foreigners to speak broken English. That the Italians should shine in music, and surpass us in an art which they dearly purchase, and to which their nation, and their whole lives, are so entirely devoted, is nothing wonderful. Excellence is the reward of application: and in decrying our language and music, and conferring the palm upon their own, by the labour of ages, refined and reciprocally adapted to each other, they act wisely as children of this world, for by that craft they live. But supposing them in the wrong, who shall inform them better? Who have we that can take upon him to say determinately, what our language may be capable of?—Our countryman Purcel, and some other modern masters, have afforded us pleasing proofs that English is not quite destitute of musical expression, and in the grand and martial style, it even soars above the Italian. There is a national music, as well as national language, both, probably, deducing their character and peculiar properties from the cast and genius of the people, and which cannot be altogether disunited, and implicitly adopted by any other without manifest disadvantages. This our masters appear to have wholly overlooked, and, neglecting the legitimate offspring, have employed all their skill and industry to naturalize a spurious issue, beautiful, and captivating indeed in its aspect, but of a meagre, emasculated constitution: Had the characters of poet and musician been united, as when they flourished in the golden days of old, matters would have taken a different turn; then they might have given their genius scope, and we should

should perhaps have heard the British lyre attuned to native strains,

Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.

MILTON.

How aptly, allowing those foreigners their utmost claims, might we then apply these admirable allegoric lines of the same divine pen, almost literally realized ?

————— ‘ I have oft heard’
Hesperian ‘ Circe, with the Syrens three,
‘ Amid the flowery kirtled Naiades,
‘ Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs,
‘ Who as they sung would take the prison’d soul,
‘ And lap it in Elysium’ —————
‘ Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
‘ And in sweet madness robb’d it of itself.
‘ But such a sacred and homefelt delight,
‘ Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
‘ I never heard ’till now’ —————

MILTON’S COMUS.

Words, in respect of thoughts, are generally esteemed mere arbitrary marks ; and the elements of which they are severally composed, as having no sort of connection with, or relation to the ideas of the mind, which by common consent they are understood to represent. The fact is otherwise. The elements of language, called letters, have the properties of musical sounds in a certain degree ; some harsh, some smooth ; some more, some less agreeable to the ear ; and these again, in the structure of words and sentences, are combined and apportioned in a rich and almost endless variety : Similar to these are the ideas and emotions which take possession of the human mind ; and it seems reasonable to imagine, that nature, independent of art, would not be so much at variance with herself, as to pitch upon coarse and discordant sounds, to represent what was in itself pleasing and desirable ; or that soft and mellifluous notes should be appropriated, to express rough and tempestuous sensations. More just and consistent is it to conclude, that the types of our ideas and emotions must correspond with the impressions that gave them birth. And as we actually find it, the very sound of the terms made use of, would frequently indicate something of the nature of the objects and conceptions of which

which they stood the symbols. Doctor *Wallis* * corroborates this Theory, by a numerous variety of examples, even in single words, wherein our language may boast a vast superiority over all others. The instances of collective expressions of this nature, picked out of the Greek and Latin poets, are well known, which it were easy to match with multitudes of a similar kind, gathered from our own writers; the following now present themselves.

An interrupted movement, flow and magnificent.

—————Thē sud'dēn glānce
Appēars far' sōuth, erup'tive thrō' thē clōūd;
And fol'lōwing flōwēr, in explōsiōn vast,
Thē Thundēr raisēs hīs trēmēdōus voīce:
At first' heard' sol'ēmn ō'er thē ver'ge ōf Heav'ēn
Thē tem'pest grōwls; bŭt ās it nēarēr com'es,
And rōlls its āwful bur'dēn ōn thē wīnd,
Thē lightēnings flāsh'————&c, &c.

THOMPSON'S SUMMER.

Light and airy.

Thē Black'-bird whiff'lēs frōm thē thōrny brāke.

IBID.

Swiftneſs.

Aſabēl, ſwift'ēr thān thē North'ern wīnd,
Scārce cōuld thē nim'blē mōtiōns ōf hīs mīnd
Oūtgo hīs feēt; sō strāngely wōuld hē run',
Thāt tīme itſelf' pērcēiv'd nōt whāt wās don'e.
Oft ō'er thē lāwns ānd mead'ows wōuld hē paſs',
Hīs wēight ūnknōwn ānd hārmlēſs tō thē grāſs'.
Oft ō'er thē sand's ānd hol'lōw duſt' wōuld trāce,
And nōt ān at'ōm trōublē ōr dēfāce.

COWLEY.

Unwieldy exertion.

————— Scārce frōm hīs mōuld
Bēhēmōth, big'geſt bōrn ōf earth', ūpheāv'd
Hīs vaſt'neſs. —————

MILTON.

* In Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae.

A soft and flowing movement.

Soft' is the strain when Zephyr gently blows
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows.

POPE.

Delicate and tender.

Awake,
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake.

MILTON, Book V.

With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming-on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven her starry train.
But neither breath of morn, &c, &c.

MILTON, Book IV.

The singing of the Nightingale described.

But hark! for thee the lonely songstress tries,
To chase the awful stillness from the skies:
In short essays she first attunes her throat,
And calls attention touching note by note;
The melting tones connected now appear,
And grateful ravishment dwells on the ear;
Smoothly continuous she gently plains,
And sweetly modulates her soothing strains;
Now bolder grown with just gradation swell's,
And all the grove her tale responsive tells;
Trilling she holds her voice; now gliding thence,
Soft, softly down, it dies upon the sense;
Scarcely heard, far, far remote, we catch the notes,
As thro' the still air the melting music floats.
Thus soft and slow, brisk, lively, clear and strong,
Till morn she warbles forth her varied song;

Piercing

Pier'cing the lov'e-torn mind and night's dull' ear,
With sounds almost too exquisite to bear.

ANONYMOUS.

Terrour, expressed in harsh and discordant movements.

Approach thou, like the rug'ged Rus'sian bear,
The arm'd rhinoc'eros, or the Hyrcanian tiger,
Take an'y form but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble.

SHAKESPEAR.

I cou'd' a tale unfold, whose lightest word,
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.

IBID.

Impetuosity.

Arm, arm, ye Heav'ens, against these per'jur'd kings,
A widow cries, Be Husband to me, Heaven!

IBID.

In the following we hear the falling of the ponderous Oak.

Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder down.

ANONY.

Uniform exertion of strength.

That bow, whose thick' tough' texture tri'd in vain,
Baff'd each effort of the courtier train.

IBID.

Cheerful imagery, with melancholy reflection.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering on the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

SHENSTONE.

Reluctance.

For who, to dumb' forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast on'e longing, lingering look behind.

IBID.

E

Anxiety,

Anxiety, with extreme languor.

Thy dēar, dēar nāme hīs last' fāint fāultēring breath'
Rēpēats ; and quit's thēe, quit's thēe, but' in death'.

ANONY.

Tranquillity and torpitude.

— — With ēasy cōurse
Thē ves'sels glīde ; ūnlēs thēir spēd bē stop'p'd
By dead' cālms, thāt of't lie ōn thōse smōoth sēas,
Whīle ev'ery Zeph'yr sēeps ; thēn thē shrōuds drop' ;
Thē dōwny feath'ēr ōn thē cōrdāge hun'g,
Mōves nōt ; thē flat' sēa shīnes like yel'low gōld
Fūs'd in thē fire, ōr like thē mārblē fīōr
Of fom'e ōld tem'plē, wīde.

THE FLEECE.

It is needless to multiply quotations, these will sufficiently illustrate what is meant by numerous composition ; and, to what an uncommon degree of perfection our language is capable of it, must strike every reader of taste. To enter into a particular analysis of their several excellencies would take up much time and attention ; and to ascertain them properly, would require a distinct and separate treatise. But this is a species of beauty not to be every where expected. The nature of language will not admit of it in all cases in an equal degree ; nor are all subjects, circumstances and situations, sufficiently important and interesting to require it ; yet an attentive reader might very easily enlarge the collection. Our poets, particularly Spenser, Shakespear, Milton and Dryden, abound with instances to the like effect innumerable ; where, as in the examples just recited, not only the general turn and movement of the verses, but the very words and elementary sounds of which they are composed, co-operate with the subject, and strongly tend to affect the mind with correspondent impressions. Will it now be sacrilege to suppose they cannot be surpassed, probably not equalled, in a like number of verses taken together, through all the extensive range of antiquity ? Be it however noted, these passages are not cited as models of pure and uniform melody, or flowing cadence, the only idea, though surely a very inadequate one, most people conceive of metre ; but as instances of that fitness of numbers, and sentimental harmony, which alone constitute the essence, the soul of genuine versification ; or as a noble writer expresses himself immediately to the point.

Sublime

Sublime or low, unbended or intense,
The sound is still a comment on the sense.

ROSCOMMON.

Such as are under the influence of particular prejudices, and have paid little or no attention to the nature and intrinsic efficacy of articulate sounds, may think this idea pushed too far, and pronounce the whole fanciful or unimportant. Every neighbourhood, coffee-house, and petty association, has its oracle, who challenges supremacy in all matters of taste and judgement, and dictates to the rest; beware of encroaching on his prerogatives; his High Mightiness is absolute, it is in vain to reason with him; he sees intuitively, in a moment, all the parts and intricacies of a subject, which has cost the painful application of years to investigate, and in three words determines the point; his sentence is law; and his opinion all decisive: but, shoemaker, go not beyond your last. Positive assertions are not argument; and though a significant shake of the head, or a consequential shrug, may serve to cloke deficiency, and, on some occasions, may for a while invalidate fact, it cannot change the nature of things. The authority of more enlarged and tempered discernment must prevail. We are not all born with the same faculties and dispositions, consequently all do not see and feel alike. Swift, that miracle of penetration and literature, had no ears for music; the screeching of a cutler's grinding-stone, was as agreeable to him, as Handel's organ, that filled every other hearer with rapture and astonishment: And tho' we suppose it possible for some men to contemplate a *Venus*, without emotion, yet that will never persuade those of happier sensations, that beauty does not exist. There must be in nature certain principles, that lead to perfection, which, though not vulgarly known, nor obvious to every eye, may not remain impenetrable to genius and industry; and those principles, though never as yet perhaps properly ascertained, must have reason and truth for their foundation. Whoever builds upon that basis, may disregard the cavils of the superficial and the vain; he will deserve praise, though he cannot ensure success.

If, as seems universally admitted, the constituent parts of speech be *Sound* and *Meaning*, the comparative excellence of languages must turn solely upon those two hinges. In the first article, we hope it appears, that the English is demonstrably inferior to none: "on the contrary," in the words of a competent judge, "from whatever lucky concurrence of

“ circumstances it hath happened, it may be proved to be superiour in its qualities, not only to all the modern, but upon the whole, to the admired languages of antiquity”——
 “ more capable of answering all the purposes of speech, whether of use or ornament, than any that has hitherto existed upon earth,”——and could we be prevailed upon to study and improve our language to the pitch of perfection whereof it is capable, he farther adds, comparing it with the ancient tongues,——“ though we might still be obliged to confess that their words were composed of syllables more vocal *, yet ours would have more spirit; theirs might have more of sweetness, but ours of energy; theirs might be better constituted to form melodious, but ours to produce harmonious, combinations. Were the pleasing flow of the syllables to the ear, alone, sufficient to the perfection of sound in a language, the Greek and Roman both must yield to the modern Italian. But too great attention to sweetness, will rob poetic numbers of their greatest beauties, which are variety and expression.”

This point has been more largely spoken to, than was originally intended; yet, as it may contribute to the advantage of delivery, our present concern, it will not be thought superfluous. The next head, *Signification* or *Meaning*, being the other constituent part of language, will be but slightly touched upon, as it more immediately relates to intellectual composition.—As to copiousness of phraseology, probably no language will be found superiour to the English, an eminent advantage for oratory. In every art and science we abound with apt and significant terms to communicate our ideas, with ease and perspicuity; so likewise to express all the operations of the fancy, the understanding and the passions, not only in a general and gross way of conception, but in all their nicest shades, and most delicate distinctions. And should any new ideas or occasions arise, requiring terms of which we are not already in possession, by the

* If we must fall out with our mother tongue, on account of some hard and unliquid syllables, which may now and then occur in it, how shall we put up with the celebrated Roman language itself, in every sentence of which we find such sounds as, tot, quot, sub, ad, sed, est, ut, et, nec, id, at, it, sit, sunt, dat, dant, det, dent, dabat, dabant, daret, darent, hic, hæc, hoc, fit, fuit, erat, erunt, fert, duc, fac, dic, &c. &c.

ANONYMOUS.

the great charter of our tongue, we can adopt and naturalize at pleasure, whatever of foreign growth may best suit our purposes. Our travelled gentry, and minor linguists, indeed, too frequently abuse this privilege. They lament the poverty and barrenness of our tongue; which, as they say, affords not words to express their ideas*, and so, at once displaying their talents and their breeding, they assume a continental pitch-patch, harlequin sort of phraseology, as foreign to the purity and elegance of speech, as to good manners and true politeness†. This species of motley jargon, seems aptly characterized by Butler, in his description of the tongue-doughty Hero, Hudibras, in effect as follows:

His tinsel'd ostentatious speech
In pilfer'd fopperies was rich;
‘ A Babylonish dialect,
‘ Which pedants † mightily affect:
‘ It was a party-colour'd drefs
‘ Of patch’d and py-bal’d languages;
‘ ’Twas English cut on Greek and Latin,
‘ Like fustian heretofore on sattin.
‘ It had an odd promiscuous tone
‘ As if he talk’d three parts in one,
‘ Which made some think when he did gabble
‘ They heard three labourers of Babel,
‘ Or Cerberus himself pronounce
‘ A leash of languages at once.

‘ Then

* The absolute want of a word in a language is the only good reason can be given for using one borrowed from another; nor is it ever justifiable, but when that is evidently the case. And then, the words so borrowed ought to be naturalized, and introduced as Denizens, both in pronunciation and spelling, conformably to the vernacular idiom; otherwise it is mere wantonness and caprice.

† Well bred men and women may be met with every where; a *polite* one is a *phœnix*: the qualifications of the former are attainable by apprenticeship, as you would a trade; to the perfection of the other unimpeachable humanity and good sense are indispensably essential. Thousands are formed to cringe in the presence of Princes, for one who knows how to conduct himself in that of a beggar. Such the depravity and servile disposition of human nature!

‡ The term *pedant*, is generally applied to those who assume scholastic importance, but is equally applicable to all who affect the appearance of any kind of knowledge or accomplishment whatever; though such as give themselves foreign airs, and, in place of Latin and Greek, impose on us a hotch-potch of French and Italian, are more commonly known by the appellation of cock-combs.

CRITO MINOR.

' Then he could coin or counterfeit
 ' New words with little or no wit ;
 ' And when with hasty noise he spoke 'em,
 ' The ignorant for current took 'em.'

HUDIBRAS, Canto I.

'Tis true every language has its idioms and peculiarities, which arise from peculiarity of sentiment, different manners and customs, with a variety of accessory causes not incident to others. But this is no test of comparative excellence: that must depend on general principles common to all. Half a dozen favourite Latin, French or Italian phrases, for which it is alledged, perhaps too rashly, we have nothing so significant, or answerable in our own, with respect to the whole of a language, are but as a mote in the sun beam; and to counterbalance those, how easy were it to produce a score of English phrases, for which there are no correspondent terms either in Latin, French, Italian, or any other language. Besides it not unfrequently happens, that the expressions obtruded upon us for elegancies from other tongues, are trite, not to say vulgar in the original; often also of such anomalous construction, that they are utterly incapable of grammatical resolution, and striking only from their imperfection; yet, in a certain class, novelty and a foreign air will reconcile, and give them a temporary currency. Thus we often hear and repeat with astonishment the expressions of infants, and foreigners attempting to speak English. They clothe their thoughts in figure and metaphor, and surprize us with bold and uncommon allusions. The reason is, that, not being thoroughly masters of the language, they are at a loss for the precise appropriated terms, and through necessity substitute of those they do know, such as they think bear the nearest affinity to their conceptions. Hence we inadvertently ascribe to genius and intention, what is in truth the effect of incapacity, or proceeds merely from a want of knowing better.

The simplicity of construction observable in our language, inasmuch that an eminent philologist thought our whole syntax might be comprized in less than twenty lines, and which is derived to us from our Saxon ancestors, has been justly esteemed one of its prime characteristics. Nor is its excellence in point of precision less remarkable. Amphibology*, as grammarians

term

* *Amphibology*, of uncertain import, tending equally to various and opposite significations.

term it, the great opprobrium of Latin and Greek, which likewise in an inferior degree affects all the other modern tongues, is scarcely known in English. Nor is it a reflection of the smallest weight, that it cannot trace back its origin to the primeval confusion at Babel, since to that very circumstance is owing its greatest perfections; a proposition so evident, that it carries demonstration in the face of it; wherefore we shall close all we intend to say at present on this head, with the following brief sketch of its history, for the information of our younger readers merely.

“ The English tongue, which eighteen hundred years ago was the pure *British* or *Welsh*, is now a mixture of a little *British*, a great deal of *Latin*, a yet far more considerable part of *Anglo-Saxon* * and *Teutonic*, a small tincture of *Danish*, *Runic*, *Gothic*, *Islandic*, and abundance of *Norman French*. It has also received great improvements since those ancient times, from the *Greek*, *Latin*, modern *French*, *Italian*, High and low *Dutch*, and in some particulars from the *Hebrew*, *Arabic*, *Syriac*, and other Eastern Languages.”

“ But though the *English* is a mixture or compound of such heterogeneous ingredients, yet as only the *valuable* parts of other languages have been selected and incorporated with it, we may properly look upon it as the *QUINTESENCE* of *various tongues*, and superior to any of the modern, in point of strength, copiousness, and harmony. In fine, though it be not so sacred as the *Hebrew*, it is not so contracted; though not so abundant as the *Arabic* †, it is not so irregular; though not so pompous as the *Greek*, it is not so indeterminate; neither is it so barbarous as the *Irish*, so inharmonious as the *Welsh*, so uncouth as the *Dutch*, nor so effeminate as the *French*. On the other hand, it is as fluent as the *Latin*, as courteous as the *French*, and as amorous as the *Italian* itself; and when thoroughly understood, it will be found, not only more perfect, but, in all the

* “ *Lingua Anglorum hodierna avitæ Saxonice formam in plerisque orationis partibus etiamnum retinet. Nam quoad particulas casuales quorundam casuum terminationes, conjugationes verborum, verbum substantivum, formam passivæ vocis, pronomina, participia, conjunctiones, et præpositiones omnes; denique quoad idiomata, phrasiumque maximam partem, etiam nunc Saxonice est Anglorum sermo.*” Hickes, *Thesaur. Lingu. Septent.* pref. p. vi. To which may be added the degrees of comparison, the form of which is the very same in the English as in the Saxon. LOWTH’S GRAMMAR.

† The *Arabic* language, we are told, has upwards of two thousand names for a sword, a thousand for a camel, and above five hundred for a lion, &c. &c. This is a dropical superfluity, not copiousness.

the essential, and even ornamental properties of languages, whether to inform the understanding, delight the fancy, or affect the passions, in poetry as well as prose, possessed of ampler powers, and probably such as are superiour, not only to any of the modern tongues, but to any of the boasted languages of antiquity, not excepting even the admired languages of *Greece* and *Rome*."

Enough at present for the structure and excellence of our tongue; which, though far short, and but the heads of what might constitute a complete treatise, seemed necessary here to premise, that our young students, as well as their parents, might be apprized of the real nature, end and scope of the exercises they were about to engage in; the advantages of cultivating their native language, in preference to all others; and its more immediate importance in the commerce of the world. This indeed they tacitly allow, who pretend they learn Latin for the purpose of understanding English; the direct opposite of which, however, would be the rational practice. All unknown tongues are taught and acquired by translating, and comparing them with our own, which manifestly presupposes, a considerable share of skill, if not a perfect mastery in the mother tongue; to put a child upon learning a foreign language on any other presumption, must be something worse than absurd; a step even beyond Egyptian tyranny; yet in spite of reason, humanity, and all that has been said by the wisest and best of men, our very parents conspire against us, and impose the unwarrantable task. Hence the difficulties and discouragements in the acquisition of languages; the frequent disgust to books, and the study of all useful letters; the irretrievable expence of time, and waste of money; the extreme scarcity of solid knowledge; the trifling; the impertinence; the smattering empty conceit; and all the train of libertine principles so prevalent in these times, and so justly and universally complained of.

I am sensible I have exceeded the usual flight of many of my younger readers, in this view and defence of our language, short as it is; nevertheless with attention, and the assistance of an able instructor, as it is necessary to be understood, they may read it to advantage. Numerous objections, I am aware also, are ready to be started against the system here maintained: The great literary dons may conceive it an imputation on their critical sagacity; and the wittings and the smarts may think it a *pure* field for jocular animadversion: they may haply discover something has been said to a like purpose by others, while
intrenched

intrenched in the cobwebs of self-consequence, and shielded in the arms of classical prescription, they display their reading and their parts in exposing its imperfections, and detecting its supposed absurdities. Let them dream on, and enjoy their pittance of felicity. The writer very seriously declares he has no design of encroaching upon the province of the one, or disputing the taste and ingenuity of the other. Truth was his object, and the honour and advantage of his profession his motives in the pursuit. He avows he has not relied solely upon his own judgment; but, in imitation of some wiser predecessors, has availed himself of all the aids he could procure, whether of books or conversation, and has occasionally adopted the sentiments of others, or received their opinions in confirmation of his own. On which account also, tho' many positions herein advanced, have never before appeared in print, he persuades himself the candid and discerning will acquit him of the charge of singularity. Unsolicitous of fame, he labours only to be useful.

Now, taking it for granted, that this comparative view of our language is impartial, and cannot, upon the whole, be fairly objected to, we have only to offer a word or two more on the chief instruments of its corruption.

Doctor Johnson, whose decisions in matters of literature are mostly conclusive, enumerating the causes of the change and degeneracy of languages, among which, he sets down as principal, folly, vanity, ignorance and caprice, has these remarkable words: "A mixture of two languages will produce a third, distinct from both; and they will always be mixed, where the chief part of education, and the most conspicuous accomplishment, is skill in ancient or foreign tongues. He that has long cultivated another language, will find its words and combinations crowd his memory, and haste and negligence, refinement and affectation, will obtrude borrowed terms, and exotic expressions."

"The great pest of speech, is frequency of translation. No book was ever turned from one language into another, without imparting something of its native idiom; this is the most mischievous and comprehensive innovation; single words may enter by thousands, and the fabric of the tongue continue the same, but new phraseology changes much at once; it alters not the single stones of the building, but
F "the

* In the excellent Preface to his Dictionary, 2 vols. folio.

“ the order of the columns. If an academy should be established
 “ for the cultivation of our style, let them endeavour with all
 “ their influence, to stop the licence of translators, whose
 “ idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will re-
 “ duce us to babble a dialect of France.”

If such be the case with writers of experience, who translate for the press, and who, we may suppose, are in some sort prepared for the task, what are we to look for from children, probably forced to it in spite of nature, without skill or previous institution; especially young *females* under the guidance of instructors, without disparagement, more ignorant in this respect than themselves. French is to be learned. If there be not a mademoiselle, sometimes when there is, a master is called in; perhaps, tolerable in his own tongue. He prescribes the lesson, a noun to decline, a verb to form, and some half a score words from the vocabulary or phrase-book to get by rote; then to write exercises, from scraps of meagre execrable English, composed par monsieur A, or monsieur B, monsieur ****, or monsieur —, translate a few pages of Telemachus, a French novel or two, the business is done; and hither we trace the prime source of corruption. To children, even their own language is in a great measure vague and unintelligible, and grammar, at best an abstruse, tho' most necessary part of learning, in this process, a chaos of unmeaning lumber. Their masters, strangers to our language, cannot make themselves understood, yet their avocation requires the utmost temper, clearness and precision. Their versions are but the mere literal exposition of words, as they stand in their dictionaries, thrown together at random, without meaning or connection. If thro' meer strength of understanding and observation they attempt any thing of latitude, or a more idiomatic expression, they step beyond their master's depth, and that for special reasons is prohibited. Thus the terms indeed are English, but the sense of the authour is obscured, or utterly perverted, and the spirit evaporates and dies. The phrase, style and construction is still foreign. They err upon principle, which, insinuating itself into their discourse, and sanctified by a soft utterance and a pretty mouth, is caught by the dangles and petit maitres, and Gallicism and Barbarism imperceptibly infect our speech, and circulate through the land. What a strange fatallity attends the youth of these nations! Boys are forced through the intricate mazes of grammar, and the mysteries of an unknown tongue, in the very tongue they are to learn; and girls are obliged to acquire all the
 knowledge

knowledge they get of that sort from outlandish teachers, whom they cannot understand ! Common Sense, where art thou ?

Contrary to reason, and the example of all civilized nations, nay even contrary to ourselves, in less momentous cases, we are careless and indiscreet in the choice of those we place about our children. Was this the practice of the Greeks and Romans, whose languages are at this day our chief study, and whose works the admiration of all mankind ? No, they had respect to the minutest article of pronunciation, even of the nurses and servants attending their infants in the very cradle ; not a slave was suffered to approach them, who spoke not the native language in its purity. Kings, consuls, heroes, philosophers, and ladies of the first distinction, engaged in the education of youth. Their tutors were the prime of mankind, and their pupils comparatively became Gods. If the remark hold, that our characters are determined by our company, the most pernicious of all company is certainly a bad tutor. Yet we commit our children to the lowest and most disqualified mercenaries : and not only their menial attendants, but the pedagogues who usurp the name of Master, so rude and unpollished in their dialect, so disgraced with a provincial brogue, that were it not repugnant to common sense, one might imagine That alone was their recommendation. The case is by no means mended in the substitution of foreigners, generally the unhoused adventurers of some remote, obscure district ; whose qualifications are even below those of our own bunglers, with the super-addition of itinerant vanity, impertinence, and national prejudices. Hence French taste, French modes of thinking, French customs, French schemes ; hence the decay of public spirit, the decline of ancient British valour ; and hence, ——— what is the natural conclusion ? O confound the rest ! French politics, French laws, French government. Forgive me, great Genius of my dear native soil, if, in the fullness of filial obligation, my fears anticipate what reason tells me shall be for ages protracted ; what hope assures me shall never be accomplished.

But granting the fatal period now approaching, then what avails our resistance ? “ If the changes that we fear *be* thus irresistible, what remains but to acquiesce with silence, as in the
“ other insurmountable distresses of humanity ? It remains that
“ we retard what we cannot repel ; that we palliate what we
“ cannot cure. Life may be lengthened by care, though death
“ cannot be ultimately defeated : tongues, like governments,

“ have a natural tendency to degeneration ; we have long pre-
 “ served our constitution, let us make some struggles for our
 “ language.” *

In these general strictures upon teachers, it would be highly unjust, indiscriminately to include all. Those who confine themselves to the classic Walk come not within the pale of our observation ; the worthy superintendants of Mathematic Seminaries stand also exempted. If there be any other, whose learning, assiduity, and well-founded reputation, distinguish them from the herd of empirical blunderers, who daily expose themselves in the public Prints, and levy contributions on the credulous, and unwary, they also have honour, and exception. The importance, and universal influence of Education, are points not now to be debated ; they are well understood and felt in Society, and no longer admit of controversy ; as, therefore, no profession is more useful, and necessary to the community, none can be more intrinsically honourable : and whoever, natives or foreigners, appear with eminent capacity, and take suitable pains to attain the requisite qualifications in any department of Instruction, while they move uniformly within their own sphere, and discharge their duty with integrity and becoming zeal, they cannot fail of approbation and respect. By a sensible and discreet Parent, they will be deemed a treasure ; and the scarcity of such characters must enhance their estimation. Teachers so circumstanced, and Parents so disposed, must be endowed with liberal and ingenuous minds ; and such are always open to the voice of reason and experience. To such particularly, these introductory observations on the ART and IMPROVEMENT of READING are, with due deference, submitted ; and, as the most accomplished Judges are ever the most deliberate and humane in their determinations, it precludes the necessity of soliciting a candid and favourable reception. In respect of the several characters occasionally glanced at in the course of this Essay, as no particular names are officiously held forth “ for the hand of scorn to point his slowly moving finger “ at,” so all personality is avoided ; and none can justly take offence. Neither dare we flatter ourselves with hopes of reforming those attached to their own opinions, and grown old in prejudice and evil habits. But the young and inexperienced will hereby perceive what is reprehensible, odious, absurd, or ridiculous in certain modes of thinking and behaviour ; will be
 guarded

* Dr. S. Johnson's Preface to his Dictionary.

guarded against a vicious imitation ; and learn to shape their own conduct and opinions from better models, and upon more enlarged principles ; thus the great end proposed is effectually made good.

OF all the various arts to which the ingenuity of man has given birth, there is none more generally studied and sought after, than THE ART OF READING : for, while other arts are restrained in their occupation, and, comparatively speaking, confined to a few professors, that is common to all, and, by means of the Press, become almost universal among us. We hear it daily and hourly practised by all ranks, ages, sexes, and conditions ; yet, how few, how very few, attain any tolerable degree of perfection in it ! Either, then, the study must be attended with extraordinary difficulties, or the methods laid down for conveying this art must be very defective and erroneous. The latter is evidently the cause ; for, many arts, to which we apply ourselves with greater success, are in their nature every way as complicated and abstruse. The first necessary step, therefore, to a reformation, will be, to lay open the sources of our errors, and defects, in the pursuit of this admirable Art : these, properly ascertained, and certain stumbling blocks, which tend much to perplex and retard the young Tyro in his progress, removed, will shorten the preceptive part, and lead more directly to a remedy. As this part is more immediately written for the use of learners, and such as are but novices in the Art of Reading, we shall omit, or but slightly touch upon matters which appear more adapted to the understanding of an advanced state, reserving them, if need be, for personal instruction, as cases and circumstances may vary ; and shall take the liberty to borrow, and incorporate, from those who have gone before us, whatever we may find proper, and conducive to our purpose. Purely original works, especially upon general subjects, are hardly to be expected in modern times ; and, it seems a weak and puerile affectation, to reject a requisite point of instruction, a pertinent observation, or, an apt and significant phrase, for no better reason, than that it was in print before. Let us do our utmost, there will still remain room for improvement ; and our labours, with all the advantages of past experience, may only prove a foundation, upon which our successors may hereafter erect a nobler super-structure.

Reading,

Reading, as offered to the ear, may be defined, the art of pronouncing the thoughts of others, or our own, exhibited in visible characters, as if the same then essentially operated in our own minds, and were the result of immediate conception.* The silent perusal of written, or printed compositions, for private gratification or advantage, to which, by custom, the term reading is also applied, is an appendage consequential to the former, and requires no particular animadversion.

That this is a correct idea of reading, practically applied to book delivery, evidently appears from the following considerations. Whatever is committed to writing must be for the purposes of instruction or amusement, and therefore we must presume the authour would have actually *spoken* it, had all circumstances concurred; and also that no composition of this description was ever intended to be confined to the mere dead Letter; we therefore who are to give it birth by the living voice should *speak* it, in the most natural and suitable manner, as it may be supposed the writer himself would certainly have *spoken* it, in a corresponding situation.

The above definition, and subsequent comment, briefly intimate the nature and design of Public Reading, and, in what consist the duty and perfection of the reader. The causes of our failure and imperfections in this elegant and useful accomplishment may be comprized under the three following heads.

First, The imperfection of the alphabetic art, or language of books.

Second, The general inadvertency, prejudices, and mismanagement of our parents.

Third, The insufficiency of our teachers, and the erroneous, ill-adapted institutions to which we are subjected in early years.

It is an undeniable and much-to-be-lamented truth, as all, who have ever taken a book in hand, have experienced, that the alphabetic or written language, which should be in all respects a precise transcript of its Archetype, the language spoken, is in a very imperfect state, and by no means calculated to answer the ends to which, in modern practice, it has been converted, and for which, in its original institution, it most certainly was never designed. † But, as there is little probability of any reformation suddenly to take place, which would superinduce some very essential changes in the Typographic Art, and considerably

* Reading has been elsewhere defined, "Artificial Speaking."

† See Sheridan on Elocution, Lecture 1st.

siderably affect all the present editions of our books, it may be regarded as a point, merely speculative, unnecessary here to insist upon. This imperfection of the written language, however, renders the art of teaching by so much the more complicated, laborious and irksome; consequently, demands a greater extent of capacity and abilities in the instructor, as well as a greater portion of attention and assiduity in the learners; their progress is by so much the more tedious and discouraging, and the instances of excellence inconceivably more rare; to say nothing of its pernicious tendency in many other respects.

In the second place, it is not generally adverted to, tho' it is indisputably true, that parents themselves are the greatest obstacles in the way of their children's improvement. Their ideas of education are frequently at variance with reason and nature; merely fortuitous, and rashly adopted. What authours have they seriously examined, and compared, on the subject? what experience is it possible they could have had? The qualifications for rearing children are not intuitively furnished with their births; neither is it a matter of course, nor an effect of instinct. No subject requires a greater stretch of thought, a closer application, or a more thorough acquaintance with human nature. Their excessive eagerness to have their children scholars is in fact the reason, why so few of them turn out such. This eagerness chiefly operates for the earliest pledges of their love; and at the very time, the nicest delicacy, and most critical discernment, is requisite to conduct them; in their infancy, and first introduction to learning. The SUPREME DIRECTOR has admirably suited the faculties of the soul to the various successive exigences and operative functions of the body; and, as we observe a gradual maturation of the corporeal powers, the mental, keeping pace with them, advance most naturally in a similar gradation. The body, in its infant state, requires early and unremitting care; so does the mind; and as, to promote a wholesome and vigorous growth, we administer to the body with delicacy and cautious reserve, by which, in due season, it ripens into size, strength, and activity, so, with the like indefatigable caution, delicacy, and judgement, should we, from the beginning, nourish and conduct the infant shoots of reason, in patient expectation of a happy and fruitful maturity. Thus, tho' in all other things, you observe children advance by regular, and almost imperceptible approaches, at once they must be scholars, whether nature consent to it or not. Reading is the immediate object. No allowances for difference of capacity;

no consideration of what minute and various preparation should precede an undertaking of such complicated difficulty. But what is here meant by reading? If children are acquainted with written words, so as to acknowledge them at sight, and give them a tolerably ready utterance, they are accounted good readers; that is the grand desideratum; and so much the most ignorant Pedagogues may easily achieve, and the sooner, the more their acknowledged merit; but, the truth is, most children read, as it is called, by much *too soon*; for, they are hurried over the elementary part, and read (bar the Solecism) before they can possibly understand. Here, then, is the first and chief source of vacancy of countenance, inanity of tone, poverty and insignificance of manner, and all the long et cetera of defects so notoriously striking, in the ablest proficient: and hence the tardy and unsatisfactory progress in all their subsequent learning.

A question here arises, the discussion of which we shall partly extract from Quintilian, as he has fully considered the merits of the point; which circumstance alone proves it an object of moment.

Is a child to be put immediately under the most excellent master that can be found? a very cogent argument against it, is, that men of genius and capacity are generally somewhat high in their demands; and this indeed is one test of ability, that they will not stoop to the mean arts of circumvention, and low prices, to steal into reputation. Yet, however, lewd hirelings go about, and climb into the fold, they are sure of abettors: and parsimonious spirits, will never want subterfuges to countenance their mistaken oeconomy.* According to the opinion

* An opulent citizen of Athens, applying to the philosopher *Aristippus*, desired to know, what he should give him to instruct his son? 'A thousand drachmas' replied *Aristippus* (about 32l. 5s. 10d. ster.) 'How!' said the Athenian, 'I could purchase a slave with that money.' 'Do so,' said the Philosopher, 'and thou shalt have two;' giving him to understand, that his son would have the manners and vices of a slave, if he did not bestow upon him a liberal education. *Ascham*, who was Queen Elizabeth's preceptor, has the following remarkable passage, to the like effect. 'Pity it is,' says he, 'that commonly more care is had, yea, and that among men deemed wise, to find out rather a cunning man for their horses, than a cunning man for their children. They say nay, in word; but they do so in deed: for, to one they will gladly give a stipend of two hundred crowns by the year, and loth to offer the other two hundred shillings. God, that sitteth in heaven, laugheth their choice to scorn, and rewardeth their liberality accordingly; for, he suffereth them to have tame and well ordered horses, but wild and unfortunate children; and, therefore, in the end, they find more pleasure in their horses, than comfort in their children.'

nion and practice of many, it is improper, or unnecessary, to put a learner immediately under the most eminent professor; but that he should apply, for some time, under those of inferior rank: as if, in forming a child to learning, a master of moderate parts is most eligible, being more easy to be understood, and imitated, as well as less impatient in removing the knotty and difficult parts of the elements of knowledge. On the contrary, it is of the last importance to give a child the earliest tincture of whatever is most excellent in its kind; for, from the very great difficulty of discharging wrong habits once imbibed, the master, who succeeds, has an accumulated task, that of unteaching his pupils what they had formerly been taught; a matter of more pains and trouble, than that of instructing them from the beginning. On which account, Timotheus, the celebrated musician, required from the scholars who begun with another master, fees, double what they paid, who entered first with himself.

They imagine, an indifferent master may do very well for beginners: a vulgar and a gross mistake! but this oversight, however blameful, would be more excuseable, did such masters only teach *less*, and not *worse*, than others. There is another mistake, still more general, that men of erudition and abilities will not descend to every minuteness of teaching; either, because they think it derogatory to them, or, that they are utterly incapable of it. But, I exclude from the rank of professors the man who thinks any part beneath his attention; and, I affirm, the abler a master is, the more capable he is of descending to it: In the first place, because we must suppose the man who excels, especially in elocution, to have most accurately attended to all the means of acquiring excellence. In the second place, method is of infinite efficacy in teaching; and the best master always practises the best method. In the last place, no man, who is eminent in great matters, can be supposed to be deficient in small ones; and, as such a man must, of course, be a man of sense and experience, he best knows how to adapt himself to all capacities. In the various branches of eloquence, particularly, the lessons of the most skilful masters are the most intelligible and perspicuous; for perspicuity is the chief property of eloquence; and, the weaker a man's capacity is, the more he endeavours to recommend himself by stretching and racking it; which, of course, renders his instructions by so much the more perplexed, puzzling, and obscure. I hold it for an absolute certainty, that the faults we daily observe are

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more owing to vitious imitation, and bad habits uncorrected, than either want of inclination, or ability. One of the reasons for putting children at first under the most excellent professor, is, because such a master, being best able to instruct his pupils, his manner of speaking is most proper for imitation; and, whenever they commit an error, they are instantly set right; while an insufficient pretender is apt to encourage them in what is faulty, and obliges his whole school to follow his wretched opinion. Therefore, the man ought to excell in elocution, as well as in morals, who undertakes this profession; and, like Homer's Phoenix, should instruct his pupil how to act, as well as how to speak.

Beside the foregoing, there are other instances, wherein parents act diametrically opposite to their children's improvement. It is necessary I speak the truth, and that will not always admit of palliatives; but, while I plead the cause of reason and misguided innocence, let it not be thought, I meant to give umbrage to any; clear in my intention, should my subject extort any thing ungrateful from my Pen, be that my acquittance.

We now suppose our infant learner, just initiated, occasionally invited to his book; which, provided the lessons be short and well adapted, not imposed as a task, but in the way of pastime, under an attentive eye, is perfectly as it should be: captivated with the novelty of the thing, and the little blandishments attending it, he advances, and makes his first faint efforts to read. Here, or even sooner, the mischief commences; here the foundation is laid for all future difficulties, errors, and defects, which, like a rolling Snow-Ball, encrease and consolidate at every turn. Command of temper, inclination, and perfect harmony respectively between the parties, were supposed at the beginning; tho' unhappily, not always the case. And, here, permit me strongly to recommend it to all, of whatever denomination, who officiate as teachers, religiously to keep this maxim in view, that command of temper, gentleness and affability, are indispensable qualifications in an Instructor; more especially, when they have to do with infant conceptions: whatever their dullness, their faults, wanderings, giddiness, inattention, follies, absurdities, omissions, the consummate master preserves a serenity of countenance, and is armed to all. Such dispositions must, doubtless, be regulated and corrected; but, the little starts, and exuberancies of childhood should be tenderly treated, and pruned with moderation, and discretion; and, if authority *must* be introduced, affection should always take him by the hand.

Timorous

Timorous younglings should never be hurried, alarmed, chidden, or in any wise maltreated, at the time of saying lessons. The business then is to prove, inform, enlighten, awake, confirm; which can only be effected, as the learner enters into it, with cheerfulness, alacrity, and spirits; if once you damp him, or depress the mind with severity, 'tis next to moving a mountain, to raise it to its natural pitch. Children, in a great measure, resemble the sensitive plant, which expands, and shews itself, at a distance, but if approached, it closes, and shrinks from observation. So, when any thing in the shape of reasoning appears, they retire into themselves, and shut up all their faculties, even to a degree of stupefaction: yet, this must be borne with; and a judicious Master, like a skilful Angler, will give them scope; play them thro' all their retreats: pursue them thro' all their windings, and, at last, bring them home to sense and reflection, as it were, by a single hair. But, to maintain this placid equanimity, and to withstand the multiplied tryals and irritations, teachers must every moment encounter, is indeed a very thorny piece of business, and the least practicable of the profession.

By this time, our lisping parroquets may be able to make their way thro' an easy chapter, or a passage in a common book; and, now, to forward their improvement, they are called to read, for tea-table entertainment, or family instruction; while the rest are at their needle, or, like *Martha*, taken up with the house affairs. But what can be expected from a divided attention, when the united care, and endeavours, of both parent and child are insufficient to the end? The scene is changed; their book no longer an amusement; mamma no longer a playmate; and, what pleased before, is now become a slavery: new pastimes, new companions, call off their little minds; their lessons are all works of compulsion, and they all hurry and impatience to get them over; a thousand negligences, lapses and inaccuracies are the consequence: Can there be any thing more provoking? maternal fondness is subdued; all is fretting, peevishness and passion; and a state of complaint, and incessant warfare, ensues. The parent, unsuspicious of the cause, and ignorant of the remedy, perseveres, and chains them to the book; as if, by reading much, it should necessarily follow, they must read well: thus, they dodge on, under a variety of fears, perturbations, anxieties, and domestic interruptions; confirm'd disgust, and obstinacy succeed; and, along with unavoidable improprieties, they often fall into wilful errors, on purpose to get rid

rid of the wearisome drudgery. At other times, I have known them so little affected, or caring what or how they read, that they have begun to yawn, and put themselves actually to sleep with their own Lullaby. At best they but contract a drowsy, lifeless, humdrum cant; which constant repetition renders habitual, and soothing to their ears; insomuch that, if, by any accident, they are ever betrayed into the natural tone of their own voice, they start at the uncommon sound, and stand abashed, all blushes and confusion, as if surprized in the commission of some shameful, or criminal act. Nor, without the indulgence of their accustomed sing-song, can they be prevailed on to proceed. Remonstrances are vain; they neither comprehend them, nor are disposed to profit by them, if they did. Children are naturally indolent, and hate application; and frequent documents, like frequent whipping, render them callous, and rather tend to injure, than amend. It is idle to think that unremitting practice will effect a cure; it makes them worse; for, every repetition but the more confirms them in the wrong, and renders any remedy against the strong prevalence of habit, impracticable. Hence we deduce this infallible conclusion; that no good reader was ever made, by reading long, and much at a time: 'tis the manner, and the quality, not the quantity, that constitutes excellence. Young ladies are still more liable to the misconduct above described, than, even, boys, who, being sent to school, where only literary and moral discipline are attended to, however little they may gain in the article of reading, pick up some other points of instruction which turn to account.

Thus, in the third place, we are led to enquire, what should be expected from masters, or teachers, by profession?

Beside, their intellectual and moral qualities, as members of society, which in all situations should be a prime consideration, none should attempt to set themselves up, or be encouraged as professors of English, but such as speak the language with fluency and grace, in all its purity, perfectly free from any brogue, or provincial taint; none, who are not able to ascertain the true sound of every English word, the quantities of syllables, and the numbers employed both in prose and verse; to correct all dispositions, natural and acquired, to give any word, or letter, an improper sound; to teach the proper use and application of accents and pauses; to regulate the tones, and modulation of the voice; to adjust the gesture to the tones, and to make the eyes, and countenance, correspond with the gesture.

This

This little sketch of the qualifications requisite to such teachers, while it shews, perhaps, too plainly, the difficulty of finding persons equal to the task, at the same time calls upon every one, who has education at heart, and who has turned his thoughts to this much-neglected branch of it, to communicate them, and throw in his mite for the general good. From this motive, the following remarks are offered to the attention of such as devote themselves to labour in that Vineyard. Many of them may seem inconsiderable, and trifling, to some; but, assuredly, not unnecessary. First principles should be minutely attended to; as upon them, however dry and unentertaining, depends our whole future success. All the wonders of Arithmetic result from the applications of a unit; all the sublime reasonings of Mathematics are built upon a point; all the exquisite delights of Music arise from the modification of a few simple elements. And as, by the Microscope, we are enabled to illustrate, and establish some of the greatest, and most essential philosophic truths; so here, if we proceed upon principle, and aim at excellence, we must make use of the microscopic eye of the mind; and discover, and acquire such habits in the minutest points, as may tend to accomplish the end proposed.

We now suppose an established master, of the foregoing description, and a child, who has never yet taken a book in hand, committed to his care, by a candid, sensible, and discreet parent. In this promising predicament, nature and experience seem to authorize, and point out, the following procedure.

First, without losing sight of authority, to conciliate his affections, and reconcile him, by soothing and gentle means, to the new scenes he is about to engage in; to which end, it will be proper, for a time, to suffer him to run about, as it were unnoticed, and at full liberty, to amuse and gratify his curiosity; by which he is relieved from all school horrors, throws off constraint, and appears in his genuine character, open and undisguised; his temper is discovered, and his dispositions ascertained; nor, were propriety strictly regarded, should his career be interrupted, till, observing his little compeers, he is touched with emulation, and applies of himself for instruction: Thus your ascendancy is rivetted in voluntary submission, and his attention is secured, from a sensation of delight. This point accomplished, the next is to call forth a liberal exertion of voice, and to model his deportment; for, without an audible, clear, and distinct utterance, no rules of delivery can have

have a suitable effect ; and an erect, composed, unconstrained posture of body is the foundation of grace ; and highly important even in the article of pronunciation. This may be brought about by placing him on a desk, or some eminence, for the purpose, and chatting with him now and then, at some distance, in his own way, upon such familiar and obvious subjects as are most likely to strike his fancy, and engage his attention. To this purpose, it will be also conducive, to propose some little hero in this way, about his own age, as a competitor. In this manner let him be invited to pronounce his letters aloud, to answer to his spelling lessons, and, in due season, to read and recite. But, no exercise should be publicly undertaken, till he be first thoroughly prepared for it in private. Which will secure his ease and presence of mind, and inspire him with courage, to acquit himself with address, and come off with eclat : otherwise, he will be exposed to shame, which would damp his spirit, render him careless and indolent, and utterly pervert the intention. Propriety, as well as grace, depends much on self-possession, which is the offspring of resolution ; and resolution is an uncertain quality, the child of habit, no less than his embarrassed, awkward, unperforming sister, fear.

In implanting first rudiments, as indeed in all other cases, compulsory methods should be studiously avoided ; and, if possible, such alone made use of as may please, encourage, allure. Abundance of such methods are prescribed in books of education ; all of which may be occasionally introduced to advantage : and others will suggest themselves to masters of ingenuity and application. Those of a different stamp, to escape contempt, would do well to renounce the employment. Be it, however, noted, that the letters are never properly and perfectly learned, till the young adept is thorough master of the various configurations of the organs, and can distinctly mark their several uses, and positions, in the formation of any sound. For this end, he should be taught them, not only in their alphabetic order, but differently disposed according to their several classes, relations, qualities, powers, and effects, as separately offered to the ear in a correct and elegant pronunciation. This would surprizingly contribute to distinct articulation, and prove a powerful antidote to hesitation, stuttering, and all other uncooth deformities of speech.

The alphabetic exercise thus thoroughly completed, and the gesture, and utterance somewhat fashioned, and divested of the usual clownish, unmeaning, puerile restraints, the transition to the

the combinations of letters, in the structure of syllables and words, is natural and easy; still adhering to the grand principle of instruction; that is, begin with what is simple and obvious, and advance by regular gradation, as the pupils improve, to what is more complex and difficult. Here, it will be necessary to provide them with a copious selection of the most useful, elegant, and expressive words, digested, and methodically arranged, for the purpose; which must also be carefully and accurately explained, as they go along. Thus gradually introducing the true spirit and principles of Orthography, their minds are likewise furnished with a valuable stock of ideas; an arduous task! and they become proficient in the theory, as well as prompt and accurate in the practice, of spelling. Then, and then only, they may with propriety be put upon reading regular and continued discourse.

Here another article, and that too of material import, solicits our care; the choice of proper books: these should be nicely suited to their years and capacity, and distinguished, not only for the excellency of their matter, and the correctness, and purity of their style, but remarkable, also, for the neatness, beauty and elegance of the type, paper, and workmanship. Such an appointment would excite their diligence, induce them to be careful, and give them early impressions of exactness and good taste. But this is an appeal to the pocket, against which, experience proves, there will be many demurrers. It is a sad consideration, that quantity so often usurps the place of quality; and that, œconomy, one of the prime virtues, should be so frequently supplanted by niggardliness, one of the meanest and most despicable of vices, the most short-sighted in its views, and subversive of its own ends.

Let them not still be obstinately blind,
Still to divert the good design'd;
Or, with malignant penury,
To starve the noble virtues of his mind. DRYDEN.

The matters here insisted upon, it is acknowledged, are minute in appearance; but important in effect; and as the method here chalked out, is the only sure road to excellence, it therefore merits the most critical regard. A mind thus habituated to examine, and sift things to the bottom, will hardly, afterwards, stop at the surface, or be put off with shadows, in place

place of realities. Trifles will never be relished ; the original tincture, good, will preserve its flavour to the last. The principles we imbibe, and the habits we contract in early years, are not matters of small moment, but of the utmost consequence ;* and can a modern treat them in too serious a light, when he has the sanction of a *Locke*, and the example of that consummate master *Quintilian*, a writer of consular dignity, to keep him in countenance ? 'Tis the practice of the ablest professors in all arts and sciences ; in drawing, music, fencing, riding, dancing, and every other accomplishment, to establish just ideas, and thoroughly ground their scholars in first principles ; and in this greatly consists the difference of masters, and the figure their scholars afterwards make in life. It is the aggregate of atoms that constitutes magnitude ; the whole circle of human knowledge and industry, dispersed in millions of volumes, is virtually contained in twenty or thirty elementary sounds ; and the greatest, and most striking perfections of art are exhibited in a few masterly touches, truly estimated, and attainable only by the skilful and industrious.

It should be an invariable maxim, that a learner never attempt any thing new, 'till perfect master of that on which it immediately depends. This, it must be owned, will check his career for a while at first ; and a child will read, in the usual way, in a fourth of the time he may require in this ; but, however flattering the prospect in the former instance, he soon runs himself out of breath, starts wide of the course, and comes to a dead stand, beyond which he never advances : in the other case, he gets into wind, gains ground and vigour every stretch, accelerates his speed, out-strips, and distances all his competitors, and, full of life, triumphant makes the goal.

Yet, however efficacious the method might prove in practice, the task remains, to persuade parents to abide the trial. Me-seems, already, it provokes their censure ; they exclaim against it as tedious and unnecessary : self-love takes the alarm, and speculative presumption conspires to explode it. Does master read ? is the question.—No. Not read yet ! and so long at school ? master such-a-one read a year ago ; and miss what-d'ye-call-it, is six months younger, and reads charmingly. In vain, you urge his proficiency in the previous rudiments ; difference of capacity ; and occasional absences : send him to another school ;

* Ου γὰρ μικρὸν δι' ἀφέρει, τὸ οὐτως ἢ οὐτως
Εὐθὺς νέων ἐθίζεσθαι ἀλλὰ παμπόλυ μαλλὸν δὲ τὸ παν.

school; his time is lost, and your money thrown away.— These things are singularly grating to masters of eminence; injurious to the child; and strike at the very vitals of education itself. They are not aware that reading, in the general sense, is but a rapid kind of spelling; and, therefore, a proficiency in that is the principal step to excellence in the other. The main difficulties in our language, it is allowed, arise from our irregular and fantastic mode of spelling,* and the various, and even contrary offices we assign to one and the same letter; particularly, as to the vowels; insomuch that each individual sound has, occasionally, almost every different character, and sometimes two or more at once, to stand as its representative. It is nevertheless evident, that reading, as to the utterance of the words, which is the first, and, indeed, with many, the only object, wholly depends upon our pre-conception of the powers of the letters, and their several combinations; and, the more perfect our skill is in that, with the greater ease and accuracy shall we perform that which is the result of it. Now, as there is no real or even pretended affinity between the sounds affixed to the several letters, and the characters themselves, it must be a work of time, and exceeding difficulty, for the volatile capacities of infants to conceive the uses, and applications of such symbols, and to associate the extrinsic ideas, with that intuitive familiarity and precision required in reading; but, utterly impossible for them, when, so far from having a distinct, and intimate conception of the nature, and properties of the letters, they are, as is frequently the case, at a loss for their very names: for, destitute of instruction, as well as example, how are they to be informed, unless by inspiration? The mind, thus distracted by different operations, is incapable of exerting itself; and, fruitlessly attempting to accomplish the accumulated imposition, the child is hurried into a thousand inadvertencies, and blunders: these the inconsiderate tyrannical pedagogue attributes to dullness, idleness, or obstinacy; and, in consequence, loads the trembling, bewildered innocent with un-

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merited

* Could a perfect alphabet be established, these difficulties would instantly vanish; for in that case, to articulate the letters, and pronounce the words, would be precisely one and the same thing, requiring only an increased degree of velocity, from that given the letters, in their separate state; which would be attended with numberless advantages; particularly to children, and foreigners; and soon give our language the pre-eminence over the French, in point of universality, as it now has in all other respects.

merited correction, and reproach; tho', plainly, the cause is in his own mismanagement, in servile compliance with the hasty futility of those who committed him to his care; as if the quantity of Birch was the measure and criterion of a master's attention and abilities. But, the mischief stops not here. The infant, thus untimely plunged into this literary chaos, "confusion worse confounded" is often, in the course of his lesson, under difficulties to compass the words; and is obliged to revolve them in his mind, before he can attempt to give them utterance; but dreading a total cessation, he fills up the hasty interval with hemming, coughing, spitting and other such specious expedients; and, impressed with the terrors of impending correction, his voice, corresponding with his affections, becomes tremulous, unnatural, low, and confused; nor do the spiritless, enfeebled, inactive deportment; the pursed brow; contracted countenance, and glaring, unideal eye, less mark the vacant embarrassed mind. The internal gloom diffuses itself throughout the entire frame. At every attempt the impressions are renewed, never after to be wholly shaken off. In a greater, or less degree, they appear through life, the moment a book is opened.

To this mistaken practice of hurrying children to read, and the neglect of all just rules of Orthography, we may properly impute the numberless barbarisms, observable in the conversation of the most polite and well bred. For, the speaker, incapable, or unaccustomed, to resolve his words into their primitive elements, and to determine, by rule and observation, what ought, and what ought not, to be altered, omitted, or retained, must, doubtless, unknown to himself, be guilty of many and gross improprieties, and, thro' want of principles, as well as consciousness, be incapable of setting himself right, or reforming others; and, if, otherwise, reputed a man of sense, breeding, and erudition, he will confirm the unskilful in their faults, and propagate inelegance and barbarism, by the authority of his name and example.

It may be alledged, all who have had a classical education spell well; but the fact is otherwise; and, if those who do, would confess the truth, it would be found that the idioms of the ancient tongues differ so widely from ours, that they contribute little or nothing in themselves to our assistance in that respect; and, that it was by dint of particular application, painful assiduity, much tumbling of dictionaries, and long practice, they acquired the use of Orthography, which might have
been

been much easier and better attained in their childhood, when memory is in its prime, and their hours could not have been more advantageously employed ; and, after all, they are found, for the most part, very defective in point of Orthoëpy, which, tho' built upon that, is of far more considerable importance ; as its uses are more immediate, general, and exposed.

'Tis true, this wears the aspect of a tedious process ; but we are here recommending what *ought* to be the practice, rather than what prudential motives may induce a teacher to pursue. For, tho' I would strenuously advise parents to place their children under the best masters, from the beginning, I would as strenuously dissuade such masters from the undertaking, at that early period. Many and irrefragable are the reasons for the first ; but, on the part of the master, the consequences are much unpleasant and irksome toil, a sorry pittance of reputation, plenty of illiberal censure ; and, after all, what is the mighty recompence ? He has to do with the million, who form their opinions, more from conjecture, than judgement ; his character, and fortunes are at stake : great adventures on a precarious tenure ! to speak plainly, what right have parents to expect a man should sacrifice life and all its enjoyments in the service of their children ; when, on their parts, they do so little to promote it ? are masters alone to bear the burthen and the heat of the day ? are they alone to be the only considerate, generous, and just ? the young ones themselves see not their own interests ; their passions, blind guides ! are their sole directors ; and they live in a state of enmity with all who oppose them ; they submit but on compulsion ; and their gratitude is written on the sands. The character of Preceptor is second only to that of parent, and ought to be held as sacred ; but, if those, whom nature and filial duty dispose them to reverence, and prompt them to imitate, choose contemptible instructors, or treat the best unguardedly, can it be imagined their children will respect them, or benefit by their instructions. Philosophers may complain, and stun us with plans of reformation ; the noblest schemes, human wisdom can devise, are but as sounding Brass, and a tinkling Cymbal, if parents do not unite and co-operate to support them. Were all masters in some sort independent of their profession, the community would profit by it ; for, then, as their risk would be less, they might, with greater security and confidence, consult the true interest of their pupils, and uniformly persevere in the right path. Property is a good barrier to integrity, and preserves, as well as corrupts

the freedom of election. We read of times, when virtuous poverty could command respect; and of public spirit, proof to ingratitude and obloquy: yet, court not the fiery ordeal; human nature is fallible, and prone to error; we know not ourselves; but in compassion to our infirmities, we are taught to prefer this daily petition, *lead us not into temptation.*

Conscious of the justice of his cause, a writer may indulge some latitude of expression, and urge his sentiments with warmth; that, with the candid and judicious, will plead his apology: notwithstanding all, the approbation, gratitude, and friendship of such, has irresistible influence over a liberal mind, and can reconcile it to the most discouraging attempts.

But, somewhat to reduce the work and comply with the prevailing persuasion, let us borrow a hint from our rivals the French. That aspiring people have long been meditating schemes of universal monarchy; and, in a variety of instances, have taken prodigious strides to accomplish their point; that of their language not among the least. Perhaps there never was a worse spoken, that deserved the name: yet, with unwearied application, and singular address, they have contrived to gain it universal currency thro' Europe. It is familiar in courts, and received in the field; 'tis the oracle of fashion, and arbitress of the toilet; not a ribband now can be worn without it; 'tis the prime vehicle of policy; and, almost, the sole medium of intercourse in the commercial world.* yet the public delivery of

* Unspeakable advantages accrue to the French, from extending their language:—however we rout them in the field, they conquer in the Cabinet—Our modern peace-factors, betraying the prerogatives of our victorious arms, and the rights of Britons, meanly stoop to negotiate, *a la mode de françois*, at the foot of a vanquished Tyrant in the language of the enemy; and we become the dupes of ignorance and folly. More instances than one might be pointed out, where the French, availing themselves of the ambiguity of their tongue, have given an unsuspected turn to words and phrases, craftily imposed upon our Ministers, by which they wrested them entirely to a different sense, and wholly perverted the spirit and intention of the treaty. In commerce, we are always playing a losing game with them. They supplant our Merchants abroad, and, along with their language, establish their manufactures at foreign Marts, in defiance of the credit and superiour qualities of the British: They seduce our workmen from us; we underhand supply them with our Wool; a practice I have heard openly defended; and, afterwards, so blind and powerful is the love of gain! we become their carriers, and vend as English their woollen goods, made up *Façon d' Angleterre*, with counterfeited marks and seals, in all the ports of Portugal, Spain, Italy, and the Levant. These, being

of it is attended with such nicety, and clogged with such complex and jarring principles, that no language can possibly be more difficult and discouraging. But this, to foreign ears, is scarcely perceptible; and the natives are too polite, and too sensible, to laugh you out of conceit with it. On the contrary, they are always ready to assist, and reconcile you to your mistakes. They extend this mode of conduct and politeness to their own children; and, accordingly, in their schools and places of early institution, their first care is to implant a strong affection and preference to their own language: and this they effect, by making it, as much as possible, easy and pleasant of acquisition. Upon this principle their children are taught, professedly, to read, whatever be the style or subject of discourse, in one uniform, unvarying strain, and to pronounce every word in absolute monotony, tho' directly repugnant to the genius of their tongue, which, on many occasions, requires different inflections of voice in one and the same word, to make it even intelligible. They think the total absence of all tones, in the case of learners, preferable to such as are false, and disagreeable, which they must inevitably contract, on any other foundation, from ignorant, unqualified teachers; and they hold it easier on this ground, afterwards, to introduce the true pronunciation, which is strictly attended to in their Academies established by authority for the purpose, than to erase the bad, and effect the same, in any other procedure.

All English words, in their separate state, are pronounced in a perfect monotony; and require no sort of inflection, or change of tone, to distinguish, or ascertain them. We effect this, upon a much simpler and more obvious principle, by accent, which, in our acceptation, consists merely in an additional stress, or loudness, without the least variation of tone, given to some one syllable in each word, called, for that reason, the accented syllable. But, when our words stand connected in sentences,

being of an inferior fabric, a circumstance which, on account of their cheapness, our *patriotic* merchants and captains of ships in that trade sagaciously overlook, have been complained of by foreigners; and, being imposed on them as British, have brought our manufactures into disrepute, and proved extremely destructive to our Woollen Staple. Prepared for the event, the French take care to nick their opportunity, send off better goods in their own bottoms, and, by under-selling us, which the cheapness of labour enables them to afford, and by the medium of a freer intercourse, they depreciate our manufactures, and procure a ready sale for their own. And yet these people accuse the English of barbarity and want of politeness!—Much might be said on this subject, were this a proper place for such discussions.

CRITO MINOR.

sentences, 'tis then we call in the aid of tones, which, affecting the whole, relatively considered, are regulated by the emphasis, and depend upon the sense of the proposition, and the conception and affection of the speakers. In this light, our language claims pre-eminence. It charms the ear, thro' the operation of the understanding; and, for its most striking beauties, appeals to the evidence of the heart: if ever a language deserved the distinction, English, in the mouth of a skilful speaker, may justly be styled, *the language of sentiment*.

Hence, we perceive the object of instruction, in the article of reading English, is two-fold.

The *first*, and most indispensable, to acknowledge the words at sight; which is all the generality conceive, or require of a reader; and even that, but in a limited and vulgar way.

The *second*, and most essential, to express the full meaning, spirit, and intention of the writer, with propriety, force, and grace. This gives life and efficacy to the diction; and is that which constitutes excellence.

Here we discover the true and regular process of teaching, which has already been pretty largely handled; and few words will serve to decide the rest. The latter of these points has an intimate connection with the former, but implies experience, judgement, penetration, and feeling; for which considerations, it should be postponed, till the fancy, and the understanding have attained a degree of strength. The first is more an effort of memory; and may be sooner attempted. To which end, the practice of the French, above set forth, might with propriety be adopted in our infant seminaries; as it perfectly coincides with the constitution of our language. Wherefore, instead of rashly precipitating our children, from their letters, to the reading of complicated sentences, and connected discourse, the method should be, to exercise them, for a season, on single words, and plain, independent phrases, after the manner of spelling books, or vocabularies, compiled for the purpose; in which the gradations from monosyllables to the several orders of polysyllables may be regularly, and strictly preserved. By these means confining their attention to articulation, and the due placing of the accent, which are the sole object in words, separately taken; and, carefully guarding against, and correcting every propensity to a vicious tone, or false modulation, they must necessarily pronounce the language idiomatically true, as to the words, and be well prepared for a nobler exertion of their powers, when permitted to try them in sentimental delivery.

livery. Easy as this matter may appear, in speculation, it will be found otherwise, on trial; and will require the nicest, and most unwearied attention of a person of skill and ability. To the pupil it promises singular advantages; as nothing can be a greater preservative against a Brogue, more efficacious to form his ear, or more immediately tend to correct a patavinity of utterance, or eradicate a vicious accent. The impatience of parents may be also better gratified in this way; as the young learner will acquit himself, *at least*, as well, whenever called upon, as he would, on the same standing in the old beaten method.

The question now may be, what particular books are most proper for the use of beginners. For children in an advanced period there is ample variety, but in the earlier stages they labour under many inconveniencies in this point. Whatever has been hitherto attempted for them, has been in general, wretchedly defective, both as to matter and style. The late Mr. Newberry, of Pater-Noster-Row, London, is the only person, who has done any thing considerable to the purpose. He indeed, has shewed his humanity, and good sense, in conforming his genius to the tender capacities of infants. Most of his publications of this sort, are perfectly well calculated to answer their ends; and, their merit is greatly enhanced by the number of curious cuts which they contain, ingeniously adapted, and well executed on Copper. Gay's Fables may succeed these; or some other easy book of the like nature, which, at once, affords instruction and delight. However it may be adviseable, to select the fables, or passages, to be read, rather than take them in the order they lie; as few books admit of an indiscriminate perusal in the early seasons of life. In the next place, a collection of the kind we now offer to the public may be introduced with advantage; which, properly taught, and thoroughly digested, we presume, will give them such a mastery in the theory and practice of elocution, that, with a little application, they may read the most difficult authours in our language, with satisfaction and pleasure, both to themselves, and others. The alphabetic language has already been complained of; our method of pointing, which is purely a modern contrivance, is equally imperfect, and not at all calculated for the great purposes of delivery: some better provision should be made for them in that article; but little effectually can be expected, till PUBLIC READING AND SPEAKING are better understood, and regularly studied, and established as an ART. We have in use but about

half a dozen marks for pauses, partially made out, and indeterminedly applied; a scanty allowance to answer the vast variety we have occasion for, and actually make use of in discourse; which are also abundantly multiplied, according to the subject, and the style; the humour, and affections of the speaker. Children, therefore, should not only be restrained to compositions, suited to their years, and within their comprehension; but it would be an eligible expedient, to have some of their books printed entirely without stops; which would oblige them to attend to the sense, as their only guide; and, as to the tones, nature would much better supply them, from the same source, than any assistance they can receive from vague, and imperfect rules; which in modern usage, like an *ignis fatuus*, tend only to lead them astray. There is nothing, of this sort, as yet extant, among us; for which reason, we have ventured some examples, interspersed in the subsequent pages, by way of Praxis, for the farther probation and emolument of the learner.

It has been an argument, warmly espoused by many, that children should learn to read, in works of prose only. That poetry is quite improper; of little use, in itself; and, in its very nature, leads to a formal, puritanical cant, or an affected theatrical mouthing, equally ridiculous, and disgusting: and so far from aiding, utterly confounds, and spoils their reading prose, which is what they have most need of; the style of business, and all the material concerns of life. However plausible, this may appear, on a cursory view, perhaps there never was a position built upon more erroneous principles, or one, which more evidently shews, our slender acquaintance with the ART OF READING, or our total ignorance of the real nature, and constitution of language. No utterance, can be agreeable to a cultivated, and correct ear; but what is strictly conformable to the laws of harmony; and regulated upon the nicest principles of proportion. The illustration of these laws and principles, in point of style, is peculiarly the province of poets; they are the registers of quantity; and, among all civilized and polite people, it is from them, pronunciation has constantly taken its course. They claim this privilege, as their hereditary right: for in the opinion of the learned, verse is the most ancient way of writing. The man of prose, we speak but of the modern, addressing himself to the understanding, is wholly indifferent to every object, but that of making himself intelligible. Unsolicitous of the graces of delivery, he not only overlooks them, but is often

often so absolutely a stranger to any thing of the sort, that 'tis highly probable, it would be a task to him, to read his own productions. On the contrary, the poet not only endeavours to express the sentiment clearly, but to interest the fancy, and the passions, by the union of the vocal powers, and all the ornaments of diction. His object is the charms of sound, and the effects of a beautiful and harmonious arrangement. The very essence of versification implies an address to the ear; of which idea if the poet one moment loses sight, it robs his composition of a beauty. Hence, some syllable-mongers cloy us with a perpetual round of the same modulation; and bad readers disgust us with their uniform, insipid monotony: had they been versed in the Art of Pronunciation, the writer would have engaged us with the diversity and aptitude of his numbers; and the reader would have done him justice in a suitable delivery. The Dancing-master confines his scholar to prescribed forms, and a measured step, and never dreams of beating the streets for the graces of deportment; the Equerry exercises his charge, and conveys the manœuvres of horsemanship in the menage; not by travelling highways, or driving headlong thro' the country: and the Master of Pronunciation and Language best inculcates the principles, and perfections, of his art, where its excellencies most abound; in the works of poets and rhetoricians. But, for those who are *not masters*, they do well to decry such compositions, as, otherwise, they certainly but the more injure the unfortunate learner, and expose themselves.

But, whatever be the exceptions, the elegancies, and perfections of language, and consequently of delivery, are best exemplified in poetry;* which makes it the more surprizing, that reading our poets, has no regular place in the education of our youth. The celebrated authour of the Oratorian Institution avers, that the foundation of reading should be laid, by beginning with the poets; above all, he prefers Homer and Virgil, on account of the learning, and morality of their poems. He recommends, also, the Tragic-writers; and select passages from the Lyric; particularly Horace: Comedies he thinks of the greatest use, in this respect, if they are well written, and not disgraced with any thing of indecent, or immoral tendency. He proves, they contribute infinitely towards Eloquence, as including all ranks, and characters of men.

I

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* Os tenerum pueri balbumque poeta figurat.

But, as the business is not to make players, but orators, who shall assert and defend the rights and privileges of their countrymen, and fellow-citizens, he advises, that the speeches from poems and plays be carefully studied, and spoken, with life, energy, and grace; but without the finesse and ostentatious mummary of the stage.* With the same view, in aid of these, he strongly recommends Music; as, without the knowledge of all such accomplishments, there can be no perfection in Eloquence.†

The best poet in our language, for this purpose, is Milton; yet, he has some particularities; so, indeed, have they all, as well as their predecessors of Greece, and Rome; the measure oftentimes reducing them to deviations, and restraints, usually signified by the term, poetic-licence. The best tragic writer, Shakespear; the best comic, also, with his cotemporary Johnson; who besides is enriched with the spoils of the classics. Our modern comedies, I speak it with regret, if you except two or three of Cumberland's, Goldsmith's, and a very few others; are wholly unfit for the Eye and Ear of youth. Beside the more ancient Lyrics well known, we have, with many others, a Mason, an Akenfide, and a Gray. How far soever the modern poets may be imagined to fall short of the ancient, in other respects; yet, in respect of ascertaining the true sound of words, they have an advantage over them, by the use of Rhyme; which, tho' confessedly introduced as a supplement, to their lack of skill in numbers, yet does not want its beauties, and is besides of excellent use, in determining ambiguous sounds: Could we prove our writers, always chaste in this particular, their authority must be absolute, 'Tis true, the reading of verse is more difficult to teach, than that of prose; and indisputably gives the young practitioner a stronger bias to false cadence; but that, tho' it may scandalize the ignorant, will be guarded against by the skilful: thus the quantities, and every other beauty of expression, found in the poets, will of course be observed, in reading prose. Consequently, if we excell in verse, we cannot be at a loss to do the same in prose, also; but the contrary is by no means the case; neither does it hence follow, that we should bend all our application, to any one species of composition, to the neglect, or prejudice of the other.

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* Quintilian de lectione Pueri, Lib. 1. cap. 5.

† Ib. Lib. 1. cap. 8.

As a farther provision, the Beauties of the Tatler, Spectator, Guardians, Rambler, &c. Select Histories, and Biography, will come properly in their turn. Fables of every kind have been generally esteemed, highly proper for children; but Fairy Tales, and Feats of Enchantment, are very objectionable; unless the instruction, they are said to contain, be minutely canvassed, and carefully divested of its allegoric robeings. Novels, and stories of Love and Gallantry, are by no means eligible, at least, till reason has gained strength to distinguish; better for them never to read, than to dabble in such trash. The portraits, they give of life, are forced, extravagant, and delusive; but even admitting a resemblance, they are too warmly, and luxuriously coloured, to leave the mind untainted.

Thus far having copiously delineated the duties of a professor of the ART OF READING; and gradually unfolded the gate, which naturally opens to perfection, in the last place, it may illustrate and enforce the theory, to take it in a collected view, as applied to some particular authour. For instance, Milton, whom we have already ventured to pronounce the best poet in our language; and, if we consider the vastness of his subject, and the copious and sublime manner, in which he has supported it, we may give him the laurel, not only in our own nation, but, preferably to all the writers, that ever existed in any age or country.* Whoever attempts to teach that asto-

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* Our Milton, confessedly, has made great use of the ancients; he often condescends to borrow, but never sinks beneath them; every thing, he touches, turns to gold; and, stamp'd with his imperial image, receives new Lustre, and Value from the mint. Yet, even he, the divine Milton, sometimes copies them, too servilely, and falls beneath himself. In the fourth book, the discovery of the Arch-deceiver, at the ear of Eve, and his reception, and subsequent contest with the warrior Angel, is a master-piece; conceived with wonderful address; and worked up with equal judgement, and sublimity: Every circumstance, that may affect and interest the reader, is introduced; Heaven and Earth are witness of the event! and all Creation involved in the catastrophe! Nature shudders, and stands suspended, in dreadful expectation!

Brevity will not admit us to cite the whole; but the following are the passages more particularly alluded to.

————— The angelic squadron bright,

Turn'd fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their Phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears—————

————— On the other side, Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Tenerif, or Atlas unremov'd,
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sate Horror plum'd;—————

————— Now

nishing performance, the Paradise Lost, undertakes an extensive task : it requires knowledge, capacity, and talents, rarely to be met with : yet, not that work alone, in a porportional degree, the same requisites, the same modes of procedure, are incidental, in the teaching of all others.

The teacher must be perfectly master of his authour's Phraaseology, and able, in clear and expressive definitions, to convey to his pupils, the various acceptations, of all the terms and words he uses, literal and figurative ; he must minutely inform them in grammatical principles ; teach them to regulate the transpositions ; supply the ellipses ; and to consider and determine his style, in all its nicest relations, and dependencies : he must make them well acquainted with the principles, and laws of

————— Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued : not only paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of heaven, perhaps, or all the elements,
At least, had gone to wreck, disturb'd, and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
*Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astræa, and the Scorpion sign, &c.*

In situations, critical, and important as this, what, but omnipotence, could extricate the poet ? Horace, in such cases, authorizes supernatural agency : *Nec deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus*. Homer, having reduced his Greeks and Trojans, to something of a similar situation, represents Jupiter, weighing the fates of the combatants, and so puts an end to a bloody engagement ; as here Milton, in imitation of Homer, describes the Almighty : yet, however admissible, on the Pagan system, where all was doubt, confusion, and obscurity, the conceit of metamorphosing a number of stars, into a pair of scales, to an enlightened age, and in a christian performance, where the Deity himself is personally introduced, and where the prime orders of Angels are made the actors, is indefensibly absurd ; a puerile flimsy pun, upon the word *libra*, a symbolical term, used by Astronomers, to denote one of the constellations of the Zodiac. Nor is the notion of suspending the World, in a golden chain, in the second book, borrowed likewise from Homer, however allegorized, a bit more reconcilable to nature and truth ; how poor and unphilosophical ! unpoetic and even contradictory ! compared with his own glorious idea of the same, in another place,

And Earth self-balanced on her centre hung.

Allowing the Ancients all their merits, and all the advantages we can possibly derive from them, if the genius of Milton could not escape the contagion of example, it shews us, how cautious we ought to be, in preparing the minds of youth, before we allow them such high seasoned viands.

of versification, and what is understood by Prosody, an article of the last importance, both to speakers and writers, though altogether a mystery to the many, and overlooked by all our grammarians; yet, wanting that, the judgement, and wonderful contrivance of the poet, in the application, variety, and beauty of the numbers of *Paradise Lost*; "making the sound an echo to the sense;" is in a great measure thrown away: he must call in the aid of logic, to detect and expose the sophistry and false reasoning of the fallen spirits; his knowledge of the scriptures, and theologic matters, will often be brought to the test, as well as his skill in the sciences, rhetoric, astronomy, physics; geography, ancient and modern; history, political, civil, military, and natural; to illustrate beauties, determine allusions, and investigate facts: he will often have occasion to exercise his knowledge in antiquities, ethics, and metaphysics; he must sometimes converse with the mechanic arts, and anon traverse the airy regions of fiction and romance. Heraldry too should lend her aid; neither must he be a stranger to the sister arts, painting and music, to follow his authour, "while he pursues things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme:" nor must he stop even here, the test and consummation of all remain behind; he must exemplify his precepts, and demonstrate to his pupils, in his *own practice*, the powers and charms of a just delivery, and set before them a *living* pattern, for their imitation. In this light we may apply to *Milton*, what the Duke of *Buckingham*, perhaps less deservedly, said of *Homer*:

Read *Milton* once, and you can read no more;
For all books else, appear so mean, so poor,
Verse will seem prose; but still persist to read,
And *Milton* will be all the books you need.

A circumstance may now probably occur, which will need accounting for. In the infant course of reading, above prescribed, there is no mention made of the Holy Scriptures: this did not happen thro' neglect, or oversight; but design. I would have the sacred books thoroughly studied, and accurately understood: but there is a time for all things. The vulgar method of putting first, the New Testament, and then the Old, into the hands of children, for the purpose of teaching to read, has prevailed time immemorial, tho', on the smallest reflection, it must appear insufficient, unnatural and absurd; and certainly
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the most prophane, if not impious practice, that could be devised. Indeed there is scarcely any thing, that so plainly shews how callous our minds may be rendered, by custom ; and altogether insensible of impressions, from the most interesting and sacred principles in nature, those of Religion, and the Happiness of our children.

All attempts at reformation, *I well know*, are looked upon by the many, with an evil eye ; and great are his risks, who ventures to attack current opinions, and aims to explode old establishments, however ridiculous ; the writer, therefore, does not build upon his own authority, in this case ; but begs leave to support his idea of the matter, in the words of a learned, and sagacious champion, in the cause of reason and literature ; who has worn out a long, and honourable life, in the service of the public.

When we consider the books of the Old and New Testaments, as sacred writings ; as containing the oracles of God ; as dictated by divine inspiration ; as fraught with the highest mysteries ; and, as intended solely, for the instruction, and perfection of our understanding, in the sublime notions, and doctrines of Religion, and Revelation, will it not appear an amazing thing to any one, but a christian, to see these writings made the vulgar praxis ; the common thesis of puerile erudition, to every child ; to every senseless boy and girl ; by every ignorant, old school dame, in England ? Who does not know, in what a religious, and sacred estimation, the books of rituals, and religious mysteries, are held by Pagans ? what a peculiar veneration, the Koran demands from the Mahometans ? and how greatly the writings of the Old Testament are rever'd, even by the Jews themselves ? these all regard such writings, as the archives of heaven ; the pandects of divine revelation ; and therefore sacred to the priests alone, and become their province, to explain, and teach, to the common people ; and even here children, and all without understanding, were never looked upon as interested, in such an exposition : such a high regard for the sacred name Jehovah had the infidel Jews, that they suffered no man to pronounce it, but the high priest, and him only, once in a year, when in the Sanctum Sanctorum ; but in christian schools, how is not only that, but all the other sacred names of God, and Jesus Christ, made the subject of childish babbling, and school dame bawling, every hour of the day ? How are those Scriptures of truth ; those written laws of God, which God himself has
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so enjoined us to lay up in our hearts, torn to pieces, and trampled under our feet, while children? How are those writings, which were intended to give the greatest pleasure, and solace to the mind, often made the cause of bodily pain and wretchedness to children! How are we reproached, and whip'd in our non-age, for not being able to read, what should only merit us praise and esteem, for understanding when we are men! and is it not extremely probable, that the book we have so frequently bedriveled, daubed, and pulled to pieces, at school, should become the object of our future indifference, contempt or averfion? and may not the grounds of Deism and Infidelity, in general, be very reasonably deduced from hence, and therefore, finally may we not look upon this custom of teaching youth to read, by the holy Bible, as an absurd profanation, and the most fordid abuse of the same?

Add to this, the insufficiency of this method, to answer any such end. Can a child be supposed to learn to read, by the Testament, or Bible; where the subject, the style, and the design of the book, are quite of a contrary nature? Is it not very preposterous to learn to read, without understanding those very books, which require to be read, with the greatest understanding; to pretend to acquire a faculty of reading easily, by books, which, of all others, require the greatest Art of Reading, to be read at all well? But such is the effect of custom, and inveterate usage, and such the weakness of human nature, that we suffer our Bibles to be prostituted, unconcernedly, to a base and mercenary interest, while we are persuaded it redounds greatly to the good of our children; and that they are, by such a method, made christians and scholars at once. The general consequence of all which is, that when our youth are grown up, they appear such hopeful proficient, that whenever they read or indite, we seldom fail to laugh, if they belong to others; or blush, if they be our own.

Should there still remain a doubt in the minds of any, that putting the Scriptures indifferently, as a mere school book, into the hands of children, is a profanation of those sacred repositories of Religion, let them seriously attend to what the learned and pious *Locke* remarks on this head, and, if they have Ears to hear, they can no longer hesitate.

As for the Bible, says he, which children are usually employed in, to exercise and improve their talent in reading, I think the promiscuous reading it through, by chapters, as they
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lie in order, is so far from being of any advantage to children, either for the perfecting their reading, or principling their Religion, that perhaps a worse could not be found; for what pleasure, or encouragement can it be to a child, to exercise himself in reading those parts of a book, where he understands nothing? and how little are the law of Moses, the song of Solomon, the prophecies in the Old, and the epistles and apocalypse in the New Testament, suited to a child's capacity? and though the history of the Evangelists, and the Acts have something easier, yet taken altogether, it is very disproportional to the understanding of children. I grant that the principles of Religion are drawn from thence, and in the words of the Scripture, yet none should be proposed to a child, but such as are suited to a child's capacity and notions; but it is far from this, to read through the whole Bible, and that for reading sake: and what an odd jumble of thoughts, must a child have in his head, (if he has any at all, such as he should have, about Religion) who, in his under-age, reads all the parts of the Bible, indifferently, as the word of God, without any other distinction? I am apt to think, that this, in some men, has been the very reason, why they never had clear and distinct thoughts of it, all their life time.

Having, in the course of the precedent pages, endeavoured to shew the disadvantages we labour under, from the neglect of our native language; the necessity of a reformation, in that article; and the importance of good Reading and Speaking to the state, and to society: Having asserted the excellence of the English language; briefly explained its chief properties; and laid open the efficient causes of the erroneous notions, conceived of our tongue; with the numerous imperfections attending our public delivery: Having presumed to draw the line of parental duty; to recommend a course and mode of teaching; and to ascertain the requisite qualifications of professors: we now proceed to the preceptive part, for the more immediate study, and improvement of learners. This, however, is not a course calculated for absolute beginners, or mere novices in Letters; such are, in themselves, incapable of deriving benefit from written instructions; it is supposed they are previously well broken, and duly prepared to receive them. Upon the whole, the attempt is for the most part new, but meant no farther decisive, than as it proves reasonable, and consistent; all which is submitted to the candour and discernment of the Judicious.



A N
E S S A Y
ON THE ART OF
R E A D I N G, &c.
S E C T I O N II.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS.

WHEN, in the beginning, the Almighty Architect created this immense globe which we inhabit, it was not merely to occupy a vacant nich in the universe ; but to ends more suitable to Divine Wisdom and Benevolence : How wonderfully constructed for the accommodation of an intellectual Being ! He surrounded it with an extensive atmosphere, the spring of action, and grand principle of life : He supplied it with water, also, proportioned and disposed so as to minister to Human necessities, by mists and dews from heaven, and by springs and rivers from the earth : The surface of the earth He rendered solid, to assist motion ; and clothed it with vegetation, to charm the sight, regale the smell, nourish the body, and establish health : The azure arch above He embellished with luminaries, to distinguish

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guish the vicissitudes of labour and of rest, and to bring about that variety of seasons, so necessary to promote a variety of delight: The seas, the air, and the earth He replenishes with innumerable animals, all good and beneficial in their peculiar kinds: And, last of all, as the end and completion of his work, he forms Man, proprietor of his creation, and assigns to him dominion over all things. But this was not enough; as a superiour testimony of his goodness and regard, he endows him with the power of reflection, and the faculty of communicating his ideas and affections, by speech; thus distinguishing him, from every other creature, by his own express image and similitude. By these singular endowments we are enabled to testify our gratitude, and render praise and adoration to our heavenly Father, from whom we derive such inestimable benefits. As created Beings, we are by nature, dependent and imperfect; but, possessed of improveable talents, 'tis sinful to neglect the means, or let slip the opportunity of cultivating them. Wherever liberty yet survives, and arts and sciences flourish, the earth proves still a Paradise; and such it must ever continue, where virtuous principles, and the blessing of speech, which alone can sustain them, are duely cultivated. To this great end, the writings of wise and good men, have ever been found particularly conducive. But, as the language of books, tho' a blessing, confessedly, next to that of speech, is limited in its nature, and inadequate in its construction, without competent skill, pains, and practice, the *Art of Reading* must ever remain in a very languishing state, and, consequently, the noblest purposes for which it was instituted be defeated.

These important considerations, which must be obvious to the comprehension of our youngest readers, should excite them to apply assiduously to this most essential branch of education, the first and principal step, by which they rise to be good men, and rational christians; useful to the state, and to society, as well as to themselves; and ornaments to their name and country. These are motives which should induce them in their earliest years, not to squander away on trifling, and idle amusements, their precious time, which, once elapsed, is irretrievable; but eagerly to seize, and make the best use of every moment allotted for private meditation, constantly bearing in mind this incontestable maxim, that all books are much easier got off by rote, than read; for thousands are fluent enough in repeating what they neither feel nor comprehend. A truth
to

to which, as experience gains ground, and knowledge advances, they will hereafter freely and cordially subscribe.

It has been elsewhere observed, that the purposes to be answered by reading, are chiefly three : The acquisition of knowledge ; the assisting of the memory, to treasure up that knowledge ; or, the communicating of it to others. The first two, may be done by silent perusal ; the last, requires reading aloud ; and this last alone is the subject of our present attention.

In the foregoing part of this essay * has been set forth what is to be understood by the ART OF READING, which the attentive learner will do well to implant in his memory, in substance, as follows : ‘ *READING is the art of pronouncing the thoughts of others, or our own, exhibited in visible characters, as if the same then essentially operated in our own minds, and were the result of immediate conception.*’ It is of the utmost consequence, in whatever we undertake, to have clear and correct ideas of what we are about, but particularly in this. For it will be found, that the rules and notions imbibed, be their tendency good or evil, and the habits contracted in the prosecution of it, have powerful influence over our delivery, ever afterwards ; not only in point of reading, but as Speakers also. Hence, in the present state of things, the arts of Reading and Speaking cannot be properly treated separately, but must go together hand in hand ; the latter being as it were the superstructure and perfection of the former ; both included under the word Elocution, the principles of which we are now to explain.

The term Elocution, like many others, has been variously applied ; some including in it, the whole Oratorical Art ; others extending it only to the diction or language, in which the Orator conveys his thoughts ; and many learned Moderns, without troubling themselves about its Latin original, confine it to the utterance, or manner of delivery : In which last acceptance, it is adopted in this Essay, agreeably to the following definition.

Elocution, is the just and graceful management of the voice, countenance, and gesture in speaking. Where those faculties are seen in a state of perfection, and the internal feelings, mutually correspond in exact unison, the result is a correct and lively delivery.

We have more than once asserted, that the written language, is by no means calculated to answer the purpose of reading aloud : And it may convince our young Readers, of the necessity of bestowing

* See page 38 of this Essay.

flowing a little pains on this branch of study, summarily to point out wherein the chief imperfections consist. The following extract, from the Lectures on Elocution, where the topic is more fully discussed, may suffice for the purpose, at present.

“The Written Language,” as there observed, “contains no visible marks of articles, which are the most important of all others, to a just delivery. A just delivery consists in a distinct articulation of words, pronounced in proper tones, suitably varied to the sense, and the emotions of the mind; with due observation of accent; of emphasis, in its several gradations; of rests or pauses of the voice, in proper places and well measured degrees of time; and the whole accompanied with expressive looks, and significant gesture.” In this is contained the sum and substance of all that can be said on the article of reading. But, as is particularly the case, in works of merit and importance, it will require frequent perusals, and attentive consideration before the learner can become master of it; and without that, our studies are trifling and ineffectual. Now, of all these ingredients, not one of which can be spared from a good delivery, there are but two, that are at all regarded in the Art of Writing; and those are, articulate sounds or words, which are marked by letters; and stops, or pauses of the voice, which are marked by little figures, and tittles. And even in these points, much greater regard has been paid to the two first uses of written language, than to the last; to the silent reader, than to him who is to read aloud to others; as may be seen by examining, in the first instance, in what manner words are spelt; in which the derivation and meaning of the words, are more considered, than any direction of the proper sounds, resulting from the arrangement of the letters. In this respect we are so exceedingly loose and irregular, that even where no end can be answered by it, the words in general, as presented to the eye, would be so far from producing the true sounds, that if they were pronounced exactly, as they are written, we should not know them to be of our language; and all passages so read, and not according to the manner used in discourse, must appear to be nothing but jargon. With regard to the second article of written language; I mean the visible marks of pauses, and rests of the voice; they are by no means more accurate, in regard to pointing out such as are used in discourse, than the words are, by the spelling, to point out their sound. And as they are managed, have proved the chief cause of some of our greatest imperfections in reading. Teachers, indeed, have

have not only been more negligent in perfecting pupils in the right use of these, but in their method of teaching, have laid down some false rules, under the influence of which, it is impossible, that any one can read naturally. But with respect to the other articles of tones, accent, emphasis and gesture, there are no visible marks to serve as guides to these. And as these latter must be allowed to be the sources of every thing which is pleasurable, or forcible in delivery; and to contain in them, all the powers of strongly impressing the mind, captivating the fancy, rousing the passions, and delighting the ear; it must also be allowed, that the most essential articles to a good delivery, have been wholly left out of the Graphic Art.

Hence we gather, not only the difficulties which the young learner has to encounter, in his road to perfection in this delightful art, but also, the several points which demand his particular care and application, comprised under three distinct heads; the voice, the countenance, and the gesture: And, first, we consider the voice, so far as the organs of speech are concerned.

A good delivery, in this sense of the word, depends upon a due attention to the following articles;

Articulation; Pronunciation; Accent; Emphasis; Tones, or Notes of the Speaking Voice; Key or Pitch, and Management of the Voice.

A good articulation consists in giving every letter in a syllable its due proportion of sound, according to the most approved custom of pronouncing it, and making such a distinction between the syllables of which words are composed, that the ear shall, without difficulty, acknowledge their number, and perceive, at once, to which syllable each letter belongs. When these points are not observed, the articulation is proportionally defective.

A good articulation, then, primarily depends upon a thorough knowledge of the alphabetic or elementary sounds of words, and the faculty of uttering them with perfect facility and precision. This Rhetoricians call *Orthoepy*, and is, properly, a part of Grammar; but, as all our treatises on that subject seem greatly defective, and erroneous on this head, till something more complete appears, we shall here offer a few introductory observations to supply the defect.

The study, my young reader, is not an easy one; but go about it in earnest, and apply, with like ardour, but a moderate proportion of the time, which you squander away in idle amusements, the path will become so easy and full of sweetness, that all your other pleasures will be accounted nothing. And, lest
you

you should be discouraged in your setting out, let us premise a few words by way of previous information and advice.

All arts have their appropriate terms and peculiar modes of expression, commonly called technical terms; which, though a writer should not pedantically affect, in many cases, he has no alternative; they are not only unavoidable, but requisite; and in their precise use and application greatly consists the merit of every didactic performance. It is, therefore, in the first place, incumbent on the learner to make himself thoroughly master of all such terms, so as to have clear and precise ideas annexed to them, wherever they occur, without which he can never make any useful proficiency; and, farther, to have his memory so effectually and familiarly possessed of them, that they may be always ready at a call, which will facilitate his progress, and render every part smooth and pleasing. I urge this the more strenuously, because, in the course of my experience, I have known numbers of both sexes, who have been negligent in that respect, groping in the dark for a length of years, and weary out themselves and their teachers in fruitless application, who were, otherwise, by nature formed to excell. In scientific studies, where the principles are few and obvious, it is more particularly to be feared: and, the more familiarly and explicitly they are treated, the more likely is it to betray the unwary pupil into an indolent inattention. What is, at first sight, self-evident and easily comprehended, is generally as easily forgotten: for, it by no means follows, that our memory shall keep pace with our conceptions. Where impressions are faint, they are speedily obliterated; and the smallest point, inadvertently omitted, may entangle us in endless confusions; making that insurmountably abstruse, which, in itself, is perfectly intelligible and consistent. Hence we learn the propriety of frequent repetitions, and the necessity of dwelling upon those minutiae which youth and inexperience are apt to look upon as trifling and insignificant. Hence we see so many stop short in the midst of their career, and, with rooted disgust, give up, in despair, many highly useful and ornamental acquirements, which might have been thoroughly mastered, and with infinitely less pains, in half the time, by a regular process. Hence that insatiable craving for new books, and that pernicious desultory habit of riding post through all, without gleaning the smallest real advantage from any. And hence, that herd of self-important smatterers, who, vainly setting up for universal knowledge, bolt out their crudities on every occasion, and make their shame their

their glory. These skimmers of science never dip below the surface, but make up in effrontery what they fall short in depth. You find them most commonly fluttering among the women, and arrogating consequence to which they are indeed slenderly entitled; yet, plumed in fantastic superiority, they arraign, to their faces, the vanity of the sex, and female imperfection is the perpetual theme of their supercilious disquisition. They never once dream how much themselves are objects of contempt, and that, in their own sweet persons, they exhibit striking examples of a far more ridiculous species of deformity. Never let our little readers be tempted to such impertinence; but let them apply with diligence, and sound the utmost depths of whatever they undertake. They will find it necessary to learn much, in order to know a little: true wisdom will teach them modesty; and the advantages of a good education will implant in their minds humanity and tenderness to those who have been less happy in that particular.

Now, resuming our theory, we shall first, as advised by the judicious Locke, endeavour to establish the meaning of our terms, and include, by the way, such other collateral matters as may illustrate and confirm the doctrine advanced: In doing which, we shall pursue the order consonant to human perception, which first views things in the aggregate, and thence proceeds to examine and deduce their principles. * Our subject at large, the reader will doubtless bear in mind, is Human Speech, of which we propose the following definition. †

Speech is that faculty, peculiar to rational creatures, by which we communicate our ideas to each other by means of the human voice. Voice consists of two principles, in common with other sensible objects, matter, and form. The matter, of which voice is generated, is simply air. Its form it is supposed to derive from certain organs, analogous to the reed in the haut-boy, or bassoon, between the lungs and the mouth; and the office of the mouth is to articulate and exhibit the voice in words which constitute the smallest intelligible parts of speech: But in course of gradation, it is requisite to ascertain the characteristic of words also.

A word

* See Harris's *Hermes*, part 2.

† A Definition is a description, concise, clear, full, and peculiar: concise, that it may be easily remembered; clear, that it may be easily comprehended; full, that it may comprise all the properties of the subject; and peculiar, that it may not be applicable to any other, and so introduce ambiguity, which it is calculated to prevent.

A word is a certain significant part of speech, composed of one or more articulate sounds or syllables. Syllables differ only from words as a part from the whole, of themselves conveying no distinct meaning, but as they constitute words; and thus we come to the basis of our enquiries. What is an articulate sound?

An articulate sound is an audible exertion of the human voice formed by the organs of speech.

Articulation or distinct utterance of what kind soever is effected by a peculiar configuration of some parts of the mouth, between the throat and the lips, and those parts, from the office so assigned them, we call the organs of speech, which are impowered to discharge their several functions by means of the breath, emitted in a peculiar way, as before observed, through the windpipe from the lungs. These, of which the tongue is principal, are the great instruments of speech; and upon their true and proper application depends its form and perfection.

But let it be noted that the discriminations of grave and acute, soft and loud, are primary qualities of voice; and the rising and falling, or transition from one note to another, is owing to other considerations, not the effect of simple articulation.

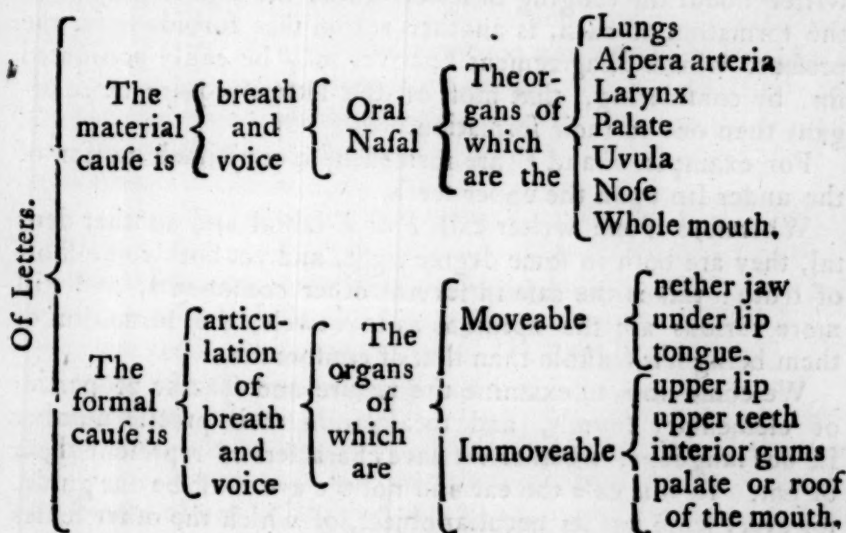
From this brief analysis we learn, that all speech, as it respects the intellect, is composed of words, and those again are resolvable into their constituent parts or elements, of which we have a two fold perception; the one through the ear, by means of the living voice, the other through the eye, by means of certain visible marks, called letters. The first we owe to the bounty of nature; the last, far short in perfection, to the invention of man. Language is a general term under which we comprise both, thus forming itself into two branches, the spoken and the written language.

It would be superfluous to prove, that, as the written language is but a transcript of that which is spoken, it ought in every point to correspond exactly with its archetype; but this has never been found the case, even in those tongues universally allowed the most perfect. Nor if we attend to the circumstances of its origin, the wonderful nature of the discovery, the avidity with which it was adopted, and the extensive reception it has at all times met with, was perfection to be hoped for. The first inventors of letters were esteemed among the greatest benefactors of mankind, and had accordingly divine honours paid to them; it was not till long after, that any improvement was imagined possible; so that imperfection was sanctified by the stamp of antiquity; and to break in upon such an established institution, was thought a kind

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of sacrilege. Errors in practice by time become habitual, and the predilection ever attendant on old customs makes the task of reformation difficult. The path men have long trodden, from that very circumstance, makes them blind to its inconveniences; they will not be beaten out of it; they know no other; will attend to no other; nay so extreme is their selfishness in these respects, they brand every attempt towards improvement, with the formidable name of innovation, and strive all they can to prevent even posterity from reaping the advantage. This accounts for the present imperfect state of letters, and leads us to a farther consideration of their nature and application.

Letters are certain symbols or visible marks invented to represent those elementary or primary sounds of which words are composed. In treating of the written language the term letter is often used synonymously for the sound for which it stands, nor need this use of the word be objected to, since letters are the elements of written words, as articulate sounds are the elements of words spoken, of which they are the types. To this combined acceptation we extend the following synopsis of the organs concerned in the utterance of articulate voice.



These seem the organs principally concerned in the formation of vocal sounds, some indeed in a remote degree, others as these fix,

The	{ Throat, Palate,	Tongue, Teeth,	Lips, Nostrils.	more
		L		

more obvious and immediately; but their precise uses and modifications, and what others may also contribute to the same purpose, is not conclusively determined. Several acute philosophers and anatomists have handled the subject very copiously, and obliged mankind with their curious researches; some have gone so far, as to ascertain all the possible articulate discriminations of which the human voice is capable, a circumstance of the utmost consequence to be known and attended to, as what must render the pronunciation of all languages easily attainable.

To apply these principles to the formation of the several sounds in the structure of our English speech we might enter into a particular detail of the disposition of the several organs in the formation of our letters. That would be a tedious process, and a work rather of ostentation than of real advantage, especially as the most accurate verbal description must fail to answer the end, without the assistance of a skilful person whose own organs are perfectly adapted, and confirmed in a pure and elegant pronunciation, to illustrate and point out their several positions by living example. The disagreement also among writers about the ranging of letters under the organs proper for the formation of each, is another reason that forbids it for the present, which disagreement however may be easily accounted for, by considering, that most of the letters require more organs than one to their formation.

For example, *F* and *V* are formed by a conjoined motion of the under lip upon the upper teeth.

Wherefore if one writer calls *F* or *V* labial and another dental, they are both in some degree right, and yet both come short of truth: this is the case in several other consonants, and still more various are the opinions as to vowels, the formation of them being less sensible than that of consonants.

We come now to examine the nature and specific properties of elementary sounds, and to ascertain their precise number in our language, whether we have characters to represent them or not. In this case the ear and not the eye must be our guide, for every sense has its peculiar object, of which the other senses can form no adequate conception, and sound is directed to the ear alone.

Should a more scientific explanation of what we call elementary sounds, or the elements of language be required, we have it from *Hermes*, that the letters (and sounds for which they stand the representatives) have acquired the name of elements, in as much as every articulation of every other kind is from them derived.

derived, and into them resolved. Under their smallest combination they produce a syllable; syllables properly combined produce a word; words properly combined produce a sentence; and sentences properly combined produce an oration or discourse: Hence we learn that

Elements are the first principles, or original essences, of which any object is composed.

Hence we also learn, that, in order to pronounce an oration, or discourse, with accuracy, it is necessary that we be perfect master of the words of which they are composed. This obviously supposes an equal degree of attention and ability, as to their constituent parts; and that we are not only perfect in syllabication, but well versed in every thing that respects letters, of which they are compounded: for, it has been remarked, with no less justice than penetration, "That minute change in principles leads to mighty change in effects; so that, well are principles entitled to our regard, however in *appearance* they may be trivial and low." For thus, the mind from a due conception of the first simple premises, is enabled to trace them through their various combinations, and to form a more adequate judgement of the whole.

Those things alone are simple, which contain no variety, or distinction of essence, but continue uniformly the same in all their parts and exemplifications, so that the smallest subdivision is one entire and perfect whole, complete in itself as the greatest imaginable extension, the only difference being that of quantity.

Quantity is an universal property, common to all sensible objects: for, without extension, nothing can exist within the limits of human perception. And, as the senses have each their peculiar objects and modes of perception, to this principle we must ultimately resort, as the basis of articulate voice, however modified and presented to the ear.

Pure and simple voice would always strike the ear in the same way, and, consequently, be useless for the purpose of social intercourse, were it not for the organs of speech disposed to give it variety of articulation; but, as the circumstances and tempers of men are widely different, the form and style of utterance will be different also; as they act with different views, and under different influence, and as their organs are more or less perfect, which may depend on climate, situation, or other external accidents, so will they differ in their mode and powers of articulation. The sounds, which prove congenial and delightful

ful to some ears, will be harsh and dissonant to others ; much also on this score shall we have to charge to vicious imitation, caprice, indolence, and unpardonable neglect. And, as the whole compass of articulate discriminations can hardly ever fall under the cognizance of, or be necessary to, any one man, or association of men, so there will of course arise an option ; and some will prevail in one place, while others are adopted in another. Add to this, the mutual intercourse of different states and nations, induced from the consideration of profit, convenience, or pleasure, with the changes brought about by ambition and violence ; all which are concurrent causes of variety of languages ; many, if not all, barbarous enough in their original, and must ever remain so, while the owners of them continue illiterate and uncivilized. But, as genius breaks forth, and they emerge from their barbarity, motives of convenience, pleasure, and emulation will induce them to cultivate and improve their speech ; proportionally to which they will be reputed in the world, as they will be in fact, civilized, and rational ; and this will lead them in course of time to the investigation of the number and value of their several articulations, as the first step to improvement, and the source of all that is excellent or valuable in their speech.

Every thing that has extension is also capable of divisibility ; but, since these are original properties of sound, and, since vocal sound derives certain characteristic distinctions from the configurations of the organs through which it passes, the nature as well as number of those distinctions must arise from the relative positions of those organs in the act of articulation.

Let it be remembered that all articulation is made *within* the mouth, from the throat to the lips inclusive, and is discriminated partly by the organs and several parts of organs officially employed, as already mentioned ; and partly by the manner and degree of articulating ; which leads to a twofold distinction ; that is, articulation by appulse, and articulation without appulse : By appulse or contact, when one of the moveable organs touches and rests upon some of the organs immoveable ; without appulse, when the discrimination is effected only by inclination or approach of the moveable organ to the immoveable, without contact, the passage through the mouth remaining free and open, and only differing as to extent or wide-ness. If there be no appulse of one organ to another, the sounds or letters, expressed by other several postures and inclinations

nations of the organs, are *vowels*. When there is an appulse or contact of any of the organs, the sounds or letters so framed are *consonants*; and thence they properly derive their denomination. Again, as to the several vowels, according to the space appropriated for emission of the voice in the formation of each, a greater or less quantity of sound will consequently issue; hence they acquire fulness, or exility, with various other powers and properties, subservient to the various purposes of ornament and expression. In the case of consonants, the appulse also varies; and is either plenary, or occlude, so as wholly to preclude all passage of the breath or voice through the mouth; or partial and pervious, so as to admit some passage out of the mouth. This also affects the sound divers ways; giving it a lisping, or hissing, or else emitting it smooth and liquid, jarring and tremulous, or compact and firm; which, by a due combination, and judicious intermixture, excites analogous sensations, and produces every thing harmonious and delightful in speech. This opens a wide field for speculation, and gives ample scope to the skilful Rhetorician for the exertion of his powers, both in composition and delivery; of which we shall say more in its proper place. But we now proceed in our Analysis, and resume our enquiries concerning Letters. And first, of the Vowels; they being, as it were, the soul and active principle of all; for, without their union and co-operation, the rest have neither power nor existence.

A *Vowel* is a simple articulate sound, formed by one impulse of the voice, at one opening or configuration of the mouth, brought to its position previously to the act of utterance.

The criterion or test of a Vowel is uniformity; for, the parts of the mouth, instrumental to its formation, being fixed to their position before the sound commences, and so remaining, without movement or alteration, during its continuance, the sound will necessarily remain identically the same to the ear, through all stages of possible extension. The least deviation or change of the organs from the first position changes the sound also, and a new vowel commences; and this gives rise to what are called *Diphthongs*.

A *Diphthong* is the union or coalescence of two sounds, under one impulse of the voice, formed by one motion of the co-operating organ during the time of utterance, without bringing any parts of the mouth into contact.—If, under the same circumstances,

cumstances, a second motion be superadded, it produces what is called a *Triptong*, which is the union of three vowels in one-syllable. A step farther must be by appulse or contact, and is that which constitutes Consonants.

A *Consonant* is an articulate sound, or particular modification of a vowel, formed of one impulse of the voice, by bringing the organs of its articulation once into contact.

Thus, all sounds whatever, expressed with the mouth, in a degree open or without contact of the organs, are essentially Vowels; though, possibly, we may have no visible marks to represent them: And, every articulate modification, produced by a single appulse or contact of the organs, is truly a Consonant, in nature and character; though no such character, expressly, may ever have found its way into the alphabet.

The nature and distinction of simple articulate sounds thus far investigated, it remains to apply the principles laid down; which strictly adhered to, the precise number of elementary sounds, and the imperfections of our alphabet may be readily and clearly ascertained, and a regular, just, constitutional pronunciation consequentially deduced, and, in time, established in practice.

Alphabet is a word derived from the two first Greek letters, *Alpha*, *Beta*, and means a series of characters representing the elementary sounds of a language successively arranged.

A perfect alphabet should contain one mark or symbol for every primary sound, and no more. In the arrangement of the letters, respect ought also to be had to the order of succession; for, as some are of more easy and obvious construction than others, they are more easily attainable, and, being first acquired, prepare the organs for those of a more difficult nature. The letter A, which stands foremost in ours, and, I believe, in all other alphabets, perhaps justly, claims precedence; since with that we are ushered into life, and proclaim our title to society: and the other vowels most properly take place, as, by the successive disposition of the organs, they are more nearly or remotely related to the first. Of the consonants, those, in the formation of which the lips are principally employed, are the sounds generally first attempted by children, and to which they attain with the greatest facility; as, b, p, m, or, the words in which these letters prevail; as papa, mama; and in most countries, of Europe at least, these words for father and mother are generally used. Children, when cutting their teeth, being much pained in their gums and roof of the mouth, frequently
apply

apply their tongue to those parts, and by that means strengthen and qualify it for the performance of other sounds, 'till, in due time, they become capable of all.

These, indeed, are minute considerations; yet, minute as they appear, much of the excellence and perfection of speech depend upon a due attention to them; and to the neglect of them we may, in a great measure, attribute stuttering,* lisping, mumbling, and many other deformities of speech, with which, in a greater, or less degree, we observe the pronunciation of most people infected.

Few alphabets, perhaps none, have ever come up to the character here delineated; and, upon examination, the English alphabet, like most others, will be found both deficient and redundant; the same letters often representing different sounds, and different letters representing the same sound, in a very perplexed and arbitrary manner.

This will be made evident, by collecting the various sounds, occasionally attributed to each letter, and classing them tabular-wise under their respective symbols.

S C H E M E O F T H E V O W E L S .

No. I.

a has 5 Sounds,	¹ <i>bat</i>	² <i>bats</i>	³ <i>ball</i>	⁴ <i>herbage</i>	⁵ <i>climate</i>		
e — 6 ———	¹ <i>bet</i>	² <i>there</i>	³ <i>here</i>	⁴ <i>her</i>	⁵ <i>serge</i>	⁶ <i>pretty</i>	
i — 5 ———	¹ <i>bit</i>	² <i>bite</i>	³ <i>pique</i>	⁴ <i>bird</i>	⁵ <i>girl</i>		
o — 7 ———	¹ <i>not</i>	² <i>note</i>	³ <i>move</i>	⁴ <i>word</i>	⁵ <i>women</i>	⁶ <i>apron</i>	⁷ <i>one</i>
u — 6 ———	¹ <i>cub</i>	² <i>busb</i>	³ <i>cube</i>	⁴ <i>bury</i>	⁵ <i>busy</i>	⁶ <i>puppet</i>	
y — 5 ———	¹ <i>mystic</i>	² <i>my</i>	³ <i>many</i>	⁴ <i>myrrh</i>	⁵ <i>myrtle</i>		
w — 1 ———	¹ <i>war</i>						

In all 35 ostensible Vowels.

Our Vowels, taken in this view, at first sight, appear to be thirty-five in number; but, on a closer inspection, rejecting

* Stuttering, and most other impediments of utterance, though they proceed, very probably at first, from the above causes, and gain strength by habit
are

ing the duplicates and allowing for other improprieties, we shall find their number considerably reduced, though much greater than hitherto admitted; as will be presently shewn.

Before we proceed in our survey of the alphabet, in order to a fair and impartial judgement, it will be expedient to caution our readers, at least such as have imbibed erroneous notions from injudicious instruction, against the illusions of prejudice, which, early contracted and sucked in as it were with our milk, in most cases, but particularly in the present, so powerfully operate upon the human mind, as utterly to confound the senses, and countermine all our intellectual faculties. In our younger years, when our minds are liable to impression, we are taught such unaccountable combinations in spelling, and so familiarized to them by custom, that, were our words pronounced as they are spelt, or spelt as they are pronounced, we should with difficulty discover them to be of our language. Let a person of education but take in hand a letter written by one ignorant of spelling, to whose manner he is a stranger, and who, as is common with such, spells wholly by ear, the trouble, it will cost him to decypher the meaning, will very fully illustrate this assertion: and, were it necessary in aid of this, we might also mention the well-known practice of ascertaining the orthography of suspected words, by committing them to paper, and appealing to the eye for information; which is generally correct in its election, though the letters, in themselves, may be very ill adapted to express the sounds they are made to represent. Thus, it might seem that, one sense stands proxy, or acts officially, for the other: But, in this we are deceived; as it proceeds altogether from an habitual association of ideas, early impressed upon the mind. It must still be remembered, the senses have each their several duties immutably prescribed. The Ear is the sole arbiter of sounds; the Eye is formed to distinguish colours; and so of the rest; each of which has its peculiar objects, of which the others are utterly incapable of forming the least adequate perception.

We must also recollect that several sounds manifestly vocal, as well as consonants, occur in our pronunciation, which have never had any particular characters appropriated to them
in

are greatly influenced by temper, and a certain frame of mind peculiar to those who labour under them, much more frequently than from any real defects in their organs; and not one of a thousand but might be perfectly cured of them, by perseverance, under the direction of a person duly skilled in the causes of those impediments

in the alphabet, and, always appearing under the signature of others, to ascertain them properly may be matter of difficulty with many, while others may be absolutely deaf to the existence of any such. But, however we find them expressed by different letters or combinations of letters, those letters and combinations serve only as marks, very inartificially indeed, to denote their powers in certain situations; but are in no wise instrumental to their vowelity: For, all sounds, purely vowels, are essentially so in themselves, abstracted from every other accident of place or circumstance. Therefore, to determine their precise energy, we need only to pronounce the word at large; then, repeating it, retrench the subsequent consonants, if any, carefully preserving the original sound of the vowel; then, in like manner suppressing the consonants preceding, we hear the genuine Vowel, detached from all incidental connections, in its simple and natural state. *E. g.* What is the true sound of the Vowel, in the word *match*? First, pronounce it correctly as it stands, *match*; then repeat it, dropping the terminating consonants *tch, ma*; then, in like manner suppressing the *m*, the ear acknowledges first *a*.

Our Vowels are affected by their position; and very differently sounded, when they end the syllable, and when succeeded by one or more consonants: a circumstance which might be apt to mislead the judgement, if not carefully guarded against.

Under the Vowel *a* are five words, in which it is introduced, wherein, correctly pronounced, we plainly perceive five several sounds ascribed to this one single character;

- 1st. *a*, as sounded by the *Irish* in the word *hat*,
- 2d. *a*, as sounded by the *English* in the word *hate*,
- 3d. *a*, as sounded by the *Scotch* in the word *hall*,
- 4th. *a*, is sounded as 1st *i*, seen in the word *herbage*,
- 5th. *a*, is sounded as 1st *e*, seen in the word *climate*.

In the three first instances, we find the same symbol adopted under different names, by three nations, speaking the same, or a dialect of the same language, to mark three several vocal sounds, wholly different in the seat of their formation, and equally different in their qualities and effects upon the ear. This stamps a distinction, strikingly characteristic, upon the national pronunciation. They all, likewise, occasionally admit the five several sounds here specified; though with little regard to conformity

with each other, or even among themselves, or, the smallest attention to principle or regularity. The total neglect of principle and regularity has also been the source of endless altercation and contradictions about the name of this First Letter, *a*; in which, likewise, the Second Vowel, *e*, sometimes comes in for share; each tenaciously insisting upon the propriety of that which prevails among themselves, and each side starting numerous examples to back their pretensions. Should not this awaken them to a sense of error; for, while all sides abound so plentifully in authorities, where lies the advantage? Partially considered, they are indisputably all right; tho', in the main, they are all astray, and equally distant from the truth. If the Irish persist in calling this Letter *universally*, *a*, as in the word *hat*, the English and Scotch justly tax them with impropriety, when by that appellation they introduce it in the words, *hate*, *able*, *table*, *hall*, *water*, and such like: If, on the other hand, the English admit no other name but, *a*, as in *hate*, *snare*, have not the Irish and Scotch the jest in their favour, when they attempt by that name to spell such words as *hat*, *Adam*, *fall*, *alter*: And, if the English and Irish remain wedded to their own opinions, have not the Scotch a right to plead a misnomer in the case of *bald*, *call*, *talk*, *halt*, *swan*, *war*, *water*, and all words of that family. It is apprehended these arguments must be conclusive; and that no exception can be made against the instances now adduced; since all are unanimous as to their pronunciation. But, the error lies in this. The letter *a* really does the office of *three* vowels; and, as such, ought to have a like distinction of name and character: when, therefore, in all cases, we indiscriminately apply it by *one* only, we run into a palpable absurdity; and nothing but custom, which reconciles every thing, could tolerate it. The two supernumerary acceptations, as they are by no means general, we may properly refer to the letters, whose office the letter *a*, in those cases, usurps; and, if the force of association be not too hard for us, we must acknowledge, that, in the word *herbage*, *a* has the sound of first *i*, and rhymes perfectly, in the last syllable, to *Etheridge*; and that *a*, in many words, assumes the sound of first *e* in *bet*, as in the words *private*, *many*, *than*, *extant*, *inculcate*, &c. &c.

What has been now said of the first letter *a*, may serve as a clue to guide us in our judgement of the rest: But, though the frequent reiteration of the same sounds must be obvious at sight, their precise number and mutual correspondence will more clearly appear in the following arrangement.

No. II.

The Sound	is marked	Ways, as in			
			1	5	6
1 a	3		bat,	serge,	sirrah,
2 a	2		2	2	
3 a	3		bate,	there,	
1 e	6		3	1	6
3 e	3		ball,	not	puppet,
1 i	6		1	5	5
2 i	3		bet,	climate,	girl,
3 i	3		3	3	3
1 o	1		here	pride,	than,
3 o	3		1	4	6
1 u	5		bit,	herbage,	pretty,
2 u	2		2	5	5
7 u	1		note,	women,	busy,
3 u	1		3	2	1
			move,	pull,	war,
			1	4	4
			cub,	her,	bird,
			2	2	3
			bite,	my,	a Diphthong formed of a, e,
					rapidly pronounced,
			7	3	1
			one,	a Diphthong formed of o, o, rapidly uttered,	
			3	3	3
			cube,	a Diphthong formed of e, o, rapidly pronounced.	

'Tis true, according to this distribution, a small difference in some cases is observable: for instance, we find third *a*, in *ball*, and first *o*, in *not*, classed under the same head; yet third *a* is long, and first *o* always short: but this is a difference in point of quantity only; in point of formation and quality of sound, they are precisely the same. Thus, in the words *ball*, *bölly*, the vowels, respectively, are both expressed by the same configuration of the organs; and differ only as to the quantity, or time taken up in pronouncing: Also, *fäll*, *fölly*, *näught*, *nöt*, &c. The same may be observed of third *o*, and second *u*; as may be seen in the words *füll*, *fööl*; *püll*, *pööl*, &c. That second *i* and third *u* are diphthongs will be readily admitted: For, put them severally to the test; that is, pronounce them, and endeavour to prolong the sound, they instantly resolve themselves

M z

into

into third *e*, and third *o*; the duplicity of sound is manifest consequently they cannot rank as simple vowels; though, from the rapidity of our pronunciation, and their being marked by single letters, which induces the deception, they have hitherto been received as such. The like is also true of seventh *o*, in the word *one*, which makes a third diphthong.

The words *myrrh*, *myrtle*, do not properly furnish us with examples of two distinct vowel sounds: But, as a difference of pronunciation prevails in different parts of the British dominions, as to words of that class, though locally uniform in themselves, a distinction is here supposed, for sake of illustration purely. *Y*, before *r*, in these and such like instances (as well as *i* and *e*,) is sounded in Ireland, and by the most correct speakers in the court of Great Britain, as first *e*, *merrh*, *mertle*; but vulgarly, in and about London, as first *u*, thus, *murrh*, *murle*; and, for *earl*, we hear *url*; for *earth*, *urth*; *virtue*, *vurue*; *mirth*, *murth*, * &c. These, and other like defects, spring from neglect and vicious imitation; which should be always carefully guarded against, and avoided.

It seemed requisite to reduce the various powers, and anomalous applications of the vowels, singly taken, to one point of view, No. 1, and 2, that our young tyro might the more easily make his estimate, and form a comparative judgement of the whole. But, to mark and ascertain the pronunciation, a singular advantage, to which these tables are adapted, a more limited distribution may take place; as in the following Schemes.

No.

* This pronunciation of *urth* for *earth*, *murth* for *mirth*, &c. is according to a vicious Cockney, or provincial idiom, introduced upon the stage by a celebrated performer, who possesses such an uncommon assemblage of theatrical excellencies, that his authority, in that line, is held up, as a sort of infallibility, which it may be hazardous to call in question. Perhaps he found it difficult to conquer the defect, and, either through indolence, or inattention, would not be at the pains of reforming; persuading himself it was of little consequence. Yet, though the stage elocution is, in numerous instances, unnatural and affected, it is, by many, esteemed the best standard of pronunciation; and, accordingly, that mouthing burly utterance is daily gaining ground, through the influence of that popular performer's example; consequently introducing new anomalies, and adding to the perplexities and difficulties of our language, too much clogged with them before. This should be a caution to men of parts, in every department, to beware of the smallest practical blemishes, or inadvertencies; as faults in them may be adopted for perfections; and so, those abilities with which providence has distinguished them, instead of a light and blessing to mankind, will be a cause of error and confusion, entailing on posterity the curse of Babel, multiplied in perpetual progression. Such are the causes, however inadequate, minute, and inconsiderable they may appear to a cursory observer, that sap the constitution of

No. III.			OR, THUS :	No. IV.		
a,	¹ Hat,	² hate	³ hall,	Hat,	hâte,	häll,
e,	¹ bet,	² there,	³ here	bet,	thêre,	hêre,
i,	¹ bit,	² bite,	³ pique,	bit,	bite,	pîque,
o,	¹ not	² note,	³ move,	not,	nôte,	môve,
u,	¹ cub,	² full,	³ cube,	cub,	fûll,	cûbe,
y,	¹ mystic,	² my	³ many,	mystic,	mÿ,	manÿ.
w,	¹ war,	² ewer,		war,	ewer,	

The little figures placed over the Vowels, to denote the difference of sound, will, questionless, be remarked; but, in scheme No. 4, another method is proposed, suggested by the Hebrew, † and partly authorized by our Saxon Ancestors. Thus: the first

of languages, and render all living tongues so fluctuating. Such were the causes that affected the celebrated Roman language so powerfully, that, from its highest perfection, to a state of sensible decay, was a period of scarcely fifty years.

† Great contests have lately arisen, respecting the method of READING HEBREW. Unhappily for mankind, Divines, as well as Politicians, have been too strongly tinctured with human infirmity: It is to be feared, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and other motives, rather than a sincere desire of truth and public utility, are too frequently the actuating principles with both. Why, else, if not to answer private purposes, should men of rank and education descend to such mean shifts, and illiberal artifices, as are daily put in practice, to crush their opponents, and impose on the credulity and weakness of mankind? Indeed, not only sound policy and public faith, but the whole system of science, seems, of late, verging to decay: and, probably, the researches of some modern critics and antiquarians may give birth to new theories, and a total revolution in literature, to convince us of our blindness, and the inanity of our most boasted acquirements. The question of the DOT VOWELS has opened new fields of controversy, and, as they can be wrestled to favour, or oppugn, certain tenets and opinions, are exploded, or espoused. The *Jews*, by their captivity, and the restraints upon the public exercise of their religion, had not only lost all that was noble and august in their worship; but, the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, together with their language, was greatly impaired, and in danger of being wholly obliterated. On their return from *Babylon*, it began to revive: Then arose the *Massorites*, those grammarians held sacred by the *Jews*; by whose care and labours, the Sacred Text was preserved incorrupt. They are esteemed the inventors of the HEBREW DOT-VOWELS and POINTS; as, probably, the *Hebrews* read without them before the times of *Ezdras*. Others say those DOT-

VOWELS

first or short sounds are left wholly without addition ; a distinction in itself sufficiently characteristic : over the second we place a single dot or tittle ; and, over the third, two : Over the Vowel *i* we have indeed always seen a dot, but wholly without meaning : wherefore, dropping that superfluous tack, we form *ist i*, which is precisely the Greek *ι*, *Iota* ; and thus, restoring our original Saxon Vowel, the whole is completed.

This mode of distinguishing our Vowels by Dots, tho', perhaps, not before adverted to, may not, probably, prove ineligible ; as it seems to carry with it its own recommendation : It, in no respect, supercedes the intelligibility of the established typography ; requires no literal accession to the Alphabet ; sufficiently indulges the present capricious humour of Spelling ; and is effected in the simplest manner possible. The marks are few, and obvious, easy of acquisition, quickly familiarized, and almost preclude a possibility of error or confusion. A few equally slight and easy, additional touches, to a few of the Consonants, might totally reform our Alphabet ; for the most part remove the chief difficulties of our language ; and free our tender infants and foreigners from the intolerable slavery they have so long groaned under ; and even without defacing the beauty of the page.

In the two last schemes before us the Vowels are confined to a ternary of each, which is sufficient to the end ; as it contains the whole compass of our vowel sounds, and their most customary acceptations ; the rest being only incidental repetitions of the same, of less general occurrence, and easily referred to their respective symbols : besides, having the advantage of brevity, they are less intricate, and with greater facility reduced to practice.

Now, deducting the several redundant marks of simple articulations and the three diphthongs, second *i*, third *u*, and seventh *o*, there remain Nine distinct Vowels ; and that number we certainly have, and no more ; * as here exhibited.

No. V.

VOWELS are of much more modern date, and were originally borrowed from the *Arabians*. Be that as it may, and notwithstanding the exceptions urged against them, for the purpose of ascertaining the true sounds of Hebrew, and the precise import of certain words and phrases, in a language circumstanced as it appears then to have been, such DOTS, applied as auxiliaries, may be of admirable use to living tongues spoken in their purity, where any literal change in the received Alphabets, imperfect as they are, might be deemed too violent. But, why should not a necessary reformation in our Alphabet and Spelling now take place ? Much greater changes in that way have been obtruded, since the times of SPENCER and SHAKESPEAR ; tho', unhappily, as they were partially, and too often capriciously, attempted, they have proved mostly for the worse.

CRITO.

* Some Grammarians extend the number of our Vowels a great deal farther ; with what propriety we may judge, when we find a *mute* summed up in the

the

No. V.

No. VI.

OR, THUS:

a,	¹ Hat,	² hate,	³ hall,	hat,	hâte,	häll,
e,	¹ bet,	³ here,		bet,	hère	
i,	¹ bit,			bit		
o,	² note,	³ move.		nôte,	möve,	
u,	¹ cub,			cub.		

REAL NUMBER OF OUR VOWELS.

¹ a,	² a,	³ a,	¹ e,	³ e,	¹ i,	² o,	³ o,	¹ u.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

OR, THUS:

a,	ä,	ä,	e,	ë,	i,	ô,	ö,	u.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Here, it is to be observed, that there are but five letters to mark nine different sounds. And this defect in our Alphabet, together with a total neglect of all just rules of Orthography, has introduced such disorder in our Spelling, that, unless we be much upon our guard, and pay no attention at all to the manner of spelling words, we shall never be able to form any just judgement with regard to their sounds.

In scheme, No. 2, it may be also observed, that, so far from being uniform in marking our vowel sounds by one and the same symbol, we seem wholly indifferent in that respect; and adopt any letter, indiscriminately, that falls in our way. None of them, except *zd o*, but has two or three of these letters to represent it. The sounds first *e*, and first *i*, are occasionally marked by every vowel in the alphabet. But, though these irregularities might be abundantly sufficient to puzzle even natives, the most conversant in our tongue, and utterly to discourage and deter foreigners, there are few of our vowels that, superadded to these, are not marked by a combination of characters in nine or ten different ways, and some, even more exemplified, in the scheme annexed.

1st

the account, and are gravely informed, that it is a *distinct sound* of itself.—Let Mr. BAY'S "horrid sound of silence" be no longer a jest; since it can be supported on such profound and incontestible Authority.

No. VII.

1st a, as in hat. ¹			1st e, as in bet. ¹		
1	aa	Isaac	1	ai	again
2	au	aunt	2	ea	dead
3	ea	heart	3	ei	nonpareil
4	ua	guard	4	eo	feoffee
5	ai	plaintiff	5	ie	friend
6	augh	*usquebaugh	6	io	fashion
7	agh	*curragh	7	oe	Oedipus
8	ah	Jehovah	8	oi	avoirdupoise
2d a, or 2d e, as in hate, there. ² ²			3d e, or 3d i, as in here, pique. ³ ³		
1	ae	hyæna	1	ea	deal
2	ai	aid	2	ee	feel
3	au	gauge	3	ei	receive
4	ay	pray	4	eo	people
5	ayo	*mayor	5	ey	key
6	ea	bear	6	ie	grieve
7	e'e	ne'er	7	oe	phoenix
8	ei	feint	8	uey	laquey
9	ey	grey	9	ui	jonquil
10	ia	parliament	10	il	fusil
11	oa	goal	1st i, as in bit. ¹		
12	oe	oeconomy	1	ai	captain
13	oi	*reconnoitre	2	ei	surfeit
14	oy	*chamoy	3	eo	pigeon
15	uay	quay	4	ia	miniature
16	eigh	neigh	5	ie	mischief
17	es	*demesne	6	ieu	*lieutenant
18	ez	*rendezvous	7	io	cushion
19	ois	*chamois	8	ui	built
20	heir	heir	9	wi	housewife
3d a, as in hall. ³			10	eig	foreign
1	au	laud	2d o,		
2	aw	law			
3	eo	George			
4	oa	groat			
5	wa	athwart			
6	augh	daughter			
7	ough	fought			
8	ogh	*Drogheda			

			2	ew	Jew
2d o, as in note.			4	oe	shoe
			5	oeu	*manoeuvre
1	ao	cacao	6	oo	moon
2	au	marauding	7	ou	soup
3	eau	beau	8	ue	true
4	ew	shew	9	ui	fruit
5	oa	oak	10	wo	two
6	oe	foe	11	woo	fwoon
7	o'e	o'er	12	ough	through
8	ou	soul	13	ous	rendezvous
9	oo	door	14	ouft	gouft
10	ow	blow	13	out	gout
11	owe	towe			
12	we	ewer			
13	wo	sword			
14	aoh	Pharaoh	1st u, as in cub.		
15	aut	hautboy	1	io	religion
16	ough	though	2	iou	religious
17	out	haut gout	3	oe	does
18	oh	shiloh	4	oo	blood
19	os	*apropos	5	ou	touch
			6	wo	Colewort
3d o, as in move.			7	wa	aukward
			8	hu	humble
1	eo	galleon			
2	eu	canterleup			

This paradigm of our anomalous application of the Vowels is formed upon the standard of the most polite and correct speakers in England; such, I mean, as have added good breeding to their learning; which must be in all such cases our best and dernier resort: Yet, comprehensive as this specimen may appear, it is not offered, as in all respects complete; but it may pave the way for others, and in the end lead us to perfection. It is, perhaps, the most complete of the kind; but, from the very nature of the thing, it must be liable to exceptions. Very few have been accustomed to consider oral sounds in this critical point of view. Our sense of Hearing, as well as other Faculties, is capable of improvement;

improvement; and, consequently, becomes blunted and dull, through inattention and want of exercise, and, so, incapable of nice discriminations. Some of the examples are unavoidably shewn in unaccented syllables, where the sounds, by nature short, are evanescent and illusive; which may perplex even a distinguishing ear, perhaps not wholly unprejudiced. Others there also are, which may be objected to; some marked by asterisks, of which it may be said, they are altogether foreign, and ought not to be set down as authorities in English. But, strip us of all words of that character, and, what will become of our language? Are they not now in a manner naturalized; well understood; often heard in English mouths; and to be met with so written in all our dictionaries and English books? Where, then, is the impropriety of introducing them on such an occasion? Would it not rather be thought an unwarrantable omission to exclude them? I doubt not, many will be astonished to see such numerous instances of irregularity and confusion in our orthography: a circumstance they would scarcely have credited, had not such a collection been set before them. And yet, these are but a part: upon examination, many others of various natures will present themselves; some of which will be hereafter noted. These are consequences of our servile attachment to extraneous etymology; and, whatever may be said in support of it, I cannot yet be persuaded of any advantages resulting from it, comparable to the inconveniencies and difficulties it occasions. The genius of our tongue prohibits, and on the justest grounds, any change in the style of our pronunciation: Why, then, do we not follow the wise examples of our neighbours, and spell more conformably to the ear? Even the illiterate understand the words as spoken, where, in any sort, the least retrospect to etymology cannot possibly have place: What, then, should prevent our recognizing them on paper in the same state? It would be *polite*, too; for 'tis *continental*. The Italians particularly authorize the practice: Do their men of genius shew any deficiency in their own language? Is it less understood; or, are the number and intricacy of verbal disputes more incidental among them, than they are with us? Is their tongue less studied, less coveted and sought after, less known, less melodious, than the English? No: Experience plainly demonstrates the reverse to be the fact; and that, too, greatly owing to the very point in question.

But, not to dwell longer on a subject so little likely to be attended with advantage, we pursue the matters more immediately

ately to our purpose. Having, in schemes, No. I, II, and VII, abundantly illustrated our various ways of marking the same vowel, we shall now produce some specimens, by which it will be seen, that we have the same way of marking several different sounds, which, with many others, may be also gathered from the foregoing schemes, comparing them in different instances with themselves.

No. VIII.

1, There,	Here,	3, Grove,	Drove,	Prove,
2, Do,	Go,	4, Door,	Noon,	Blood,
5, Fourth,	Youth,	Mouth,	Tough,	
6. Bear,	Hear,	Head,	Heart.	

It may be objected, that the instances here set down, as well as those No. VII, are Diphthongs. But this will be easily obviated, by recurring to the definitions already given; and, as they do not fall within that description, lest a name should be wanting, they may, for distinction sake, be termed *Digraphs*, i. e. *two Characters* denoting one sound.

Whoever, therefore, wants to judge of the true sound of any syllable, or word, let him banish from his mind the letters whereof it is composed in writing, and be directed by his ear only in new spelling the word according to its pronunciation. In order to this, it will be necessary, in the first place, to refer every vocal sound in a syllable to its proper vowel by name, as drawn out in the present scheme of the Vowels, which shews their different sounds and manner of marking them; as, thus,

No. IX.

Fourth,	second o,	Förth,	Youth,	third o,	Yöth,
Door,	second o,	Dör,	Mouth,	first o, sec. u,	Mouth,
Come,	first u,	Cum,	Bear,	second e,	Bër,
Touch,	first u,	Tuch	Hear,	third e,	Hër,
Grove,	second o,	Gröv,	Head,	first e,	Hed,
Drove,	first u,	Druv,	Heart,	first a,	Hart,
Prove,	third o,	pröv,	Field,	third i,	Fild.

Such

Such is the force of association of ideas, that, unless persons are much upon their guard, the letters which they are accustomed to see in spelling will obtrude themselves on their memories, and, at first, prevent their readily making a just judgment of the true simple sounds to be referred to. But, a little practice in this way will soon render it easy; especially, if the person will, for some time, not revolve the words in his mind only, but write them also down, and then compare his spelling them with the scheme of the vowels before mentioned, in order to try whether he has referred the sound to its true vowel.

Having ascertained the number of our Vowels or first class of alphabetic elements, and shewn how to refer our different manners of marking them to their true sounds, we come now to consider the second order of elementary symbols, or those formed by appulse, called Consonants, in the same way. Of these, our grammarians tell us, we have twenty-one in number, viz.

No. X.

B,	C,	D,	F,	G,	H.	J.	K,	L,	M,	N,	P,
be,	see,	dee,	ef,	gee,	aitch,	ja,	ka,	el,	em,	en,	pe,
Q,	R,	S.	T,	V,	W,	X,	Y,	Z.			
ku,	ar,	es,	te	ve,	double yu,	ex,	wy,	zed,	or izzard.		

Here we must call to mind an observation before made, that *a perfect alphabet should contain one mark or symbol for every primary sound, and no more.* Upon examination, then, it will appear that we have no less than seven letters, received in our Alphabet as Consonants, wholly redundant:

C and Q are superfluous; only supplying the place of K, or S: C stands for S, before e, i, y; as in cease, cite, cypher; or united with h, at the end of a word; as in bench: in all other situations, for K; as in cap, coat, cup, clay, cry, dictate, music; *i. e.* before a, o, u, l, r, or, when it ends a syllable.

Q, from custom, is put instead of K, before the vowel u, forming a diphthong; as in quack, queen, quiet, quote.

H, is no letter, tho' generally esteemed one; having no power but that of aspiration: on which account it found no room in the Greek alphabet. It precedes any of the vowels, by previous emission of breath only; not in the least affecting the necessary configuration of the organs, which, were it essentially a Consonant, would necessarily induce a change and some degree of appulse; *e. g.* and, hand; end, hend; is, his; odd, hod;

ut,

ut, hut; in all which, respectively, the position of the mouth remains precisely the same, requiring only a previous aspiration to the latter.

W, and Y, never are consonants, as it is erroneously asserted by grammarians, but are at all times vowels; as appears from the definition of simple sounds, and other considerations to be seen hereafter.

J, is the mark of a compound sound, made up of dzh, as Joy, dzhoy.

X, stands for two different compound sounds, one gz, as in the word Example, Egzample; the other ks, as in veks.

The two last come under the denomination of contractions, rather than distinct letters; as that of & for *and*, &c.

SUPERFLUOUS CONSONANTS, SEVEN.

C, Q, H, W, Y, J, X.

Subducting, therefore, the above seven characters, there remain but fourteen letters in our alphabet to mark the sounds of our simple consonants, when in reality we have twenty; which, to render it perfect, would require an addition of no less than six new characters; as may appear in the following Words,

No. XI.

Thin, thine, shall, azure, ink, ring.

But, as five of the simple sounds are marked always by two letters, they have passed upon us for compounds: two of these sounds, No. XI. are marked by the same combination, th, without the smallest distinction: the 1st, eth, as in thin; the other, eth, as in thine; the 3d, by sh, as in shall; the 4th sound, ezh, has no peculiar mark; but is sometimes represented by an s, as in the word *osier* ozher; sometimes, by a single z, as in *azure* azhure: the fifth and sixth sounds, marked by nk, and ng, by recurring to the nature and definition of elementary or primary sounds, will also be found to be of that order.

We are almost as irregular in the use of our Consonants, as in that of the Vowels; of which take the following view, from the Lectures on Elocution.

No.

No. XII.

C, has three sounds,		k,	care, kare,
		s,	cease, fease,
		fh,	social, foshal.
F, has its sound marked by two different combinations of letters.	}	ph,	Philip, Fillip,
		gh,	laugh, laf.
G, has two sounds,	1,	g,	[it's own sound] gold,
	2,	j,	gentle, jentle.
S, has four sounds,		s,	yes,
		z,	rose, roze,
		fh,	passion, pashun,
		zh,	osier, ozher.
T, has also four sounds,		t,	tell,
		s,	fatiety, fasiety,
		fh,	Nation, Nashun,
		tsh,	question, questshun.
X, has three sounds,		gz,	example, egzample,
		ks,	vex, veks,
		z,	Xerxes, Zerkfes.
Th, has two sounds,	1,	th,	thin,
	2,	th,	thin.e
Ch, has three sounds,		k,	chorus, korus,
		fh,	chaise, fhaze,
		tsh,	choose, tshoose.
Gh, has two sounds,	1,	g,	ghost, goft,
	2,	f,	laughter, lafter,
And is often mute,			daughter, datur

Thus, by the transmutation of consonants as well as vowels, and also by the frequent omission, suppression, and introduction of letters, greatly arising from one cause, a pedantic attachment to etymology, together with the wretched ignorance of our teachers, we have reduced our orthography and pronunciation to such a state, that it is almost impenetrable to all, but a few of our best educated natives; and to them, only by long practice, and assiduous attention. Indeed, had we sat down to invent a set of hieroglyphics, purposely to render our speech abstruse and unattainable, we could scarcely have done it more effectually. But, those, who have once mastered the difficulty, never after attend to it, and give themselves little trouble about what may be the misfortune of others; and the ignorant and careless don't much feel its influence: and so it remains, without change, or remedy.

In judging of the Consonants, we should, therefore, take care to spell the words in our own mind, or upon paper; as in the case of the Vowels, by the direction of the ear; referring each simple sound to its proper character, according to the specimen just given, and revolving each single character that stands for compound sounds into the letters which it represents. Thus, the number of simple Consonant sounds in our tongue appears to be twenty.

No. XIV.

b, d, f, g, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, v,
eb, ed, ef, eg, ek el, em, en, ep, er, es, et, ev, ez.

th, th, sh, zh, nk, ng.
eth, eth, esh, ezh, ink, ing,

That these supernumerary sounds are not arbitrarily introduced, will manifestly appear from the following considerations.

The world is indebted for the art of Printing to the Germans: and, tho' introduced among us by a native of our own country, the compositors and others, employed under him, were foreigners, and so continued in chief repute for a series of years successively: we have, therefore, no reason to suppose them over masters of our speech, or too critically skilled in our orthography, then in a very fluctuating state. In this respect we have the indisputable records of their own works; which
plainly

plainly shew they were inconsistent, arbitrary, and utterly regardless of method. They imported with themselves their alphabet and character; which, in process of time, were laid aside for the Saxon, more properly our own. For some time, the practitioners in this new art attempted only the common alphabet adapted to the Latin tongue; all the books first printed being in that language. It soon passed over to Rome, and Venice, where it was cultivated with great assiduity, and flourished exceedingly; but under the patronage of some of the Italian Princes the old character was superseded, and the Roman alphabet substituted in its place; which, in a short time was brought to such perfection, that, in the beginning of the year 1474, they cast a letter, not much inferior to the best type of the present age. The beauty and elegance of this type gained it a general preference, which supplanted all the rest: and thus, the Roman alphabet, tho' it by no means corresponded with our original Saxon, nor furnished symbols to mark several sounds which we had naturalized from other tongues, was adopted by the English, and established in most other literary states of Europe. The poverty of the received alphabet reduced our printers, who, frequently exercised the twofold avocation of author and typographer to a thousand awkward expedients, to render the spelling conformable to the pronunciation, the original intention, doubtless, in all tongues, which, together with their great remissness and want of skill in these points, laid the foundation of the confusion and irregularity, under which we labour to this hour.

Having thus briefly stated facts, we come to ascertain the particulars.

Every modification of sound, observable in our speech, articulated by one simple appulse of the organs, must be considered as a single consonant, and ought, as such, to have a place in our alphabet. Of this description are all the fix sounds above set down, however differing in nature and degree.

eth, and eth, we inherit from our Saxon ancestors, for both of which their alphabet supplies distinct characters, þ, ð; ð, dh; as in the words þin, thin; ðine, thine; the first of which is also found in the Greek alphabet, expressed by their θ theta.

esh, we meet with in the Hebrew alphabet, denoted by their ש shin, (as in the word shiboleth) remarkable for having cost 42000 men their lives, who could not pronounce it; yet an articulation

articulation with which the organs of British subjects are perfectly familiar, which being uttered by a single effort of the voice, and incapable of prolongation, is therefore to be referred to the class of mutes; the particular nature and number of which, together with the semivowels, shall be presently shewn.*

ezh, is a semivowel formed after the same manner, precisely by the same organs with which we express the mute esh; and though we have no single character for either in our alphabet, we find a separate and distinct letter appropriated to one of them by the French; their j, and our ezh, being in sound precisely the same. In this, however, the French insist we are deficient, and we, without examination, as on other occasions, complaisantly acquiesce in their decision.

ng—ing, and nk—ink, as in sing, sink, are also single sounds; the first a semivowel, the latter a mute, both articulated by a single appulse and similar configuration of the same organs; ng, ing or eng, is formed by raising the middle of the tongue gradually, rather near the throat, to a gentle contact with the palate, so as that part of the voice may issue through the mouth, and the remainder be forced back through the nose. The same disposition of the same organs takes place in the formation of nk, ink or enk; but by a more sudden and closer pressure of the tongue to the palate, the passage of the voice through the mouth is instantly stopped. We indeed have no separate character for either of them; a defect which the learned and elaborate Dr. Wilkins seems much to regret in regard to the sound ng, ing or eng; the mute, nk, not having been observed by him or any other grammarian. Philologists tell us the Hebrews have a character for ng, ing, exemplified by the stroke of a bell, which they contend is the true sound of their y, Ain or Oin. The sure test of a simple letter, whose sound can be prolonged, the characteristic of all the semivowels as well as vowels, is, the Ear's perceiving that it is the same sound which was first formed that is continued; this is obvious in prolonging the sounds L . . . l, N . . . n; the beginning, middle and end are the same, however long continued; the same is also obvious in prolonging the sound ng . . . ing or eng, and therefore it must be a simple letter. The letters called mutes, being incapable of prolongation, from which circumstance they take their name, the specifick characteristics are not so clearly perceptible;

O

* For the word Shibolet, &c. . . see Judges, ch. xii. v. 6. It signifies a spike, or blade of corn.

ceptible ; of this class however, being formed at a single effort by one appulse of the organ, is nk . . . ink or enk, which has the same relation to ng . . . ing or eng, as ef has to ev, or es to ez, and is therefore a single letter : both ng and nk are perhaps peculiar to the English language.

Uniformity, or absolute sameness, is severally the characteristic of all single sounds, vowels and consonants, be their quantity or duration of utterance long or short ; that this distinguishing property appertains to the six preceding articulations, any speaker may satisfy himself by attending to his own utterance of them, if his articulation be perfect, and his ear unprejudiced, capable of discriminating, and therefore though we have no distinct characters to represent them, they should be considered as elementary sounds and ought to make part of our alphabet.

Of all consonants, semivowels or mutes, without exception, it is especially to be observed that, as they are formed by appulse or contact of the organs respectively employed, the sound is never complete or perfectly definite, till the organs are again separated, or return to their usual quiescent state.

Upon reviewing our alphabet we shall find that there are in our tongue, nine vowels and twenty consonants ; in all twenty and nine elementary sounds. Now to compare our tongue with the noblest language of antiquity, the Greek ; and with the most generally known of modern times, the French : first, with regard to the vowels and next to the consonants. It is evident from what Dionysius Halicarnassens has written on the subject, that the Greeks had but five vowels ; consequently we exceed them by four, and have almost double their number. The French can point out in their tongue the same number of vowels that we have ; but there is this essential difference between us, that the short sounding vowels are so thinly scattered through their tongue that they reap little advantage from their number ; whereas with us, the short sounding vowels are so far predominant in our tongue, which they should be, for reasons hereafter to be assigned, as to give us every advantage of an agreeable variety, which it is in the power of such a number of vowels to give in our tongue.

With regard to consonants we have six which the Greeks had not, and these are :

V, Z, Th, Sh, Zh, Ng.

Some

Some are of opinion that the V was the Æolic Digamma (F); but if it were so, it was peculiar to the Æolians, and did not spread through the rest of Greece. Our Z is not the same as their Zeta, which we are told by Dionysius was a compound sound made up of *ds*, *dseta*. Their Θ had but one sound, the same as our *th*, as in the word *thin*, but they had not the sound of our *th*, as in *then*. Sh and Zh there are no traces of, and the sound ng, was not known to them; as those letters are never joined in one syllable, N finishing the former, and G, or Gamma beginning the next. They did not sound the word as we are apt to do *Ang-gelos*, but *An-gelos*. The advantage which this enrichment of our alphabet has given our language over the Greek, shall be shewn in its proper place.

With respect to the French we have only two simple Consonant sounds more than they, and those are *th*, and *th*, sounds which most Frenchmen find it difficult or impossible to utter, merely from their not being shewn the position of the organs in forming them, by which method they might be taught to pronounce them distinctly in a few minutes.

Having ascertained the number of elementary sounds in constant use in our language, and of course the requisite number of characters to stand as their symbols, marks, or representatives, it remains to add something concerning the accidents of letters, of which we reckon five, viz.

Figure, Name, Order, Affinity, Pronunciation.

1st. Of their figure. The beauty, accuracy, and delicacy of the Roman character, now universally adopted in our books, and the skill and attention displayed in the various mechanical processes conducive to its perfection, renders it unnecessary to say much on that subject. For every purpose of perfectly discriminating them the characters in use are sufficiently distinct, if they were but sufficiently numerous; and, as now established, to make any very prominent alteration would be neither eligible nor perhaps practicable. The grand objection is, that it would be attended with trouble and expence without any advantage to the present race of adepts, and render the subsisting impressions of books in a manner useless. It must be also owned, that the motley mixture of uncouth and heterogenous characters exhibited in some specimens of this kind by Johnson in the Grammar prefixed to his Dictionary, are not much calculated

culated to answer the end, or do away the prejudices generally entertained on the score of Innovation. Yet upon the present system the business is not impracticable, and most of the purposes for which such an improvement is desirable might be accomplished without injury to the beauty of the page, or in the least militating against the use of the current editions.

The great cause of confusion and complaint in the established Orthography is, the various offices to which we arbitrarily assign the same characters. Some have attempted to remedy the evil by the introduction of new characters and a total change in the system of spelling; but this would be perhaps introducing a greater evil, to which there are insurmountable objections. It would probably answer better to accommodate a little, and try what emendations, without violence, can be made to the character in use. The vowels are the least numerous, but subject to the most capricious and perplexing anomalies; to begin with these, still retaining the old letters: the method I would recommend to ascertain their powers is by dots, as heretofore hinted; each Vowel in point of sound being appointed to three distinct offices, as already shewn, the first I would leave in its naked state without any addition, as we find it in the alphabet, which would be in itself a sufficient distinction, as a; over the second I would put a single dot, as ä; over the third two dots, as ä, and so of the rest. See the Scheme of the Vowels, No. iv. p. 86.

Hat . . . häte . . . häll

Bet, &c.

and for this we have a precedent without resorting to either foreign or obsolete alphabets; the vowels with two dots or diæresis ä, ë, í, ö, ü, being sorts already received in our printing-houses; which could not be charged as innovation, and would consequently be a saving both of trouble and expence.

A reformation in the consonants might be effected with equal ease and advantage; of these the eight following are the most awkwardly circumstanced:

c, g, fh, zh, th, th, nk, ng.

The two first as representatives each for two different sounds, and the six last as double letters for single sounds, to which, in nomination or power they have not the smallest relation or reference. C, when it stands for S, might be marked with a cerilla

cerilla *c* as in *city*, *cyp*her, in the manner of the Spanish and Portuguese Grammarians, and remain as at present when it stands for *k*, as in *carrol*, *caper*; *g* has a sort of little cockade mounted at the right, wholly superfluous and without meaning, which never appears in writing; this, when *g* has its own peculiar sound might be also cashiered in printed books, as in *game*, *grove*, *log*; but might remain to distinguish its soft and adventitious sound, as in *gentle*, *giant*, *cage*: *esh* in the small type is already sufficiently distinguished, the *f* and *h* being joined at top *fh*, which if called as it should be *esh*, would be to all intents and purposes a single character; but that, as it appears, was wholly unintentional, and has been objected to, for what reason I know not, by some of our letter-founders; and by casting *lk*, *sl*, *fl* in the same way it is rendered of no use, except to heighten the confusion; *th* and *th*, as standing for simple sounds might be connected by carrying the stroke of the *t* into the body of the *h*, and adding a cerilla to the mute *th*, *eth*, to distinguish it from the semivowel *th*, *eth*; in like manner the finishing stroke at the foot of the *n*, in *nk*, *ink*, and in *ng*, *ing*, might unite with the *k*, and the *g*, which would severally reduce them to single characters agreeable to their sound; and for the rest a few grammatical observations, which might be mastered in a couple of hours, would abundantly suffice. But under this regulation they should no longer be discriminated by the names of the letters of which they are apparently composed; but as in this way they constitute but one character or letter, representative of one sound, they should have respectively, as before inculcated, but one name expressive of their several powers, and this rule to be invariably observed through the whole alphabet, as recommended under the article names, p. 106, for which we have examples in our own usage; even in the case of single characters representing compound sounds; for instance *j*, *jay* for *dzh*, as in *James*, *Dzhames*; and *x*, which has two sounds though but one name, *eks*, in *exercise*, and in *example*, pronounced *egzample*, which might be distinguished in like manner by the cerilla when pronounced *eks*, *x*, leaving it in its pristine state *x* when sounded *egz*, giving in such cases like the rest the name conformable to the sound. By the way, it might seem extraordinary, could we not produce examples of a similar nature equally extraordinary, that the two letters *I*, and *J*, one purely vocal,* and the other

* The reader will meet with some curious specimens of this kind, by way of illustration, at the conclusion of this article.

other decidedly a consonant, should ever be confounded ; James for James, Iohn for John, &c. in some cases, though not so common, j is put for i, particularly in manuscript. Their figures, which are already sufficiently distinct, one should think might be a direction ; an unequivocal direction which leaves no excuse for so palpable a blunder.

Thus, without defacing a single letter, or adding one to our alphabet ; without the smallest retrenchment or alteration in the established orthography, by a few significant touches perfectly congenial with the modern cast, and so minute in themselves that they could not hurt the eye of the most fastidious connoisseur, we should, with exceptions comparatively few, be freed from the trammels of ambiguous and perplexing combinations, and our alphabet rendered, if not entirely perfect, the best adapted to its end of any in Europe : Correct spelling, which is now the labour of years, and with difficulty attained by our best educated natives, instead of a tedious and disgusting task, would become an amusing employment. Having a character for every simple sound, which would be nearly the case, and calling them uniformly by apposite simple names, the complicated drudgery of spelling and putting together would be at an end. The mere naming of the letters would suggest their powers in combination, and reading, so far as respects the first material object, a just pronounciation of the words, would be reduced to a very simple process. In effect, spelling would be but a slower sort of reading, and *vice versa*, reading but a rapid kind of spelling ; there would be a reciprocation of advantages, for each would confirm and mutually assist the other. This would be the greatest relief and encouragement to children and foreigners, who require every inducement to learning, and those who are in possession of the old method would find no difficulty in resorting to the new ; the new, having the pronounciation clearly ascertained, would in its turn be the best preparative, and, in all cases of doubt, a standard for the old. To say nothing of adepts, those who are but tolerably conversant with the Roman Typography find little or no difficulty in reading books printed in the Italic, or even the old English character, and by an easy transition the German Text, as used in MSS. Secretary, Court-Hand, and Chancery, soon become familiar ; and in the way of reformation far greater alterations have been made, even in the use of the modern Type, than what is here proposed. Besides it is not necessary that works of every kind should be printed in this way ; it need only be extended to ele-
mentary

mentary works, and such as are adopted in our schools for the instruction of learners.

On a supposition that, by the foregoing or any other means, the deficiencies of our alphabet were properly supplied, as to the particular figure or form of the characters, having in the first instance allowed them to be sufficiently distinct, little more remains to be added. The letters W and Y which have been so much the theme of contest ever since the revival of letters, seem the only characters any way remarkable in point of figure. Our w, precisely the same in sound as the ou of the French, the Italian u or Greek ω , as we pronounce it, is manifestly taken from the Greek alphabet; and neither more or less than two omicrons oo , or two short o's joined together oo , forming their ω , omega, or *o long*, by one continued stroke of the pen, through hurry in writing or mere carelessness, left open at top, which our own daily practice in small or running hand abundantly demonstrates, and of which also the form of the Italic ω in our own printed books affords corroborating evidence. The form of the English w is indeed of a remoter analogy; but that may without difficulty be accounted for; it was a matter of expediency; for in cutting the punches, and in sinking the matrices or moulds in which the types are cast, the engraver would naturally make choice of the easiest form, which is manifestly in favour of straight lines in preference to the round, wherever he was left to his option and had a precedent to keep him in countenance;—that he had not long to seek for. He might have had the old English $\mathfrak{w}$ under his eye, the Saxon $\mathfrak{w}$,* or the example of Greek usage still more to the purpose. Alexander Drummond, Esq. his Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, in the very interesting account of his travels, folio, London, printed by Wm. Strahan, 1754, has given several fac-similies of the Greek alphabet

* This form ($\mathfrak{w}$) of the Saxon double u, is taken from the Saxon alphabet as given by Johnson, who must have copied it from Bailey, Phillips, or some other early lexicographer, and is, perhaps, but a modification of the old English $\mathfrak{w}$; for it does not appear so formed in the alphabet given by Mrs. Elizabeth Elstob, the De Scudery of England, who published a Saxon Grammar under the patronage of the Queen, nor in Somner's Anglo-Saxon Vocabulary, Hickes's Institutes, or his Thesaurus, the Testament of Alfred, &c. with any of which it is probable Johnson was not acquainted. The most accurate Saxon alphabet handed down to us by those authors seems but a mongrel composition of the Roman, and the remains of the primitive Saxon, grown obsolete even in their times, and no where to be met with entire.

alphabet carefully traced from the antique. The four following forms of the Omega, so perfectly corresponding with what is here advanced, are remarkable and decisive:

∞, *III*, *W*, *W*,

This also, if unquestionably the *Cadmi* knew their own letters, is a powerful proof, connected with the rest, that *w* is not a consonant but a vowel.

We have the same authority for the origin and form of our *y* in the Greek Upselon, four different specimens of which are likewise thus exhibited by Mr. Drummond:

γ, *y*, *Y*, *υ*,

pronounced in that language *u*, *öö*; but in naturalizing the figure we have perverted its use, and, in giving it the sound of *i*, applied it in a way but ill supported by the original.

Without entering into any farther discussions of this nature, I shall conclude this article with an attempt to shew, as a point of curiosity, how this particular letter, *y*, which seldom or never appears at the end of words in the ancient orthography, obtained so general a preference among the moderns; a peculiarity which could not be admitted on the plea of derivation, and has hitherto been left unaccounted for by our grammarians.

The words now ending with *y*, were anciently spelled with an *i*, as *cri*, *fli*, *ladi*; and as customary with Scriveners in those days, the last letter was commonly doubled, or in the ostentation of penmanship run into a little flourish or curl, which bearing some resemblance to the vowel *e*, in process of time, through ignorance or carelessness, was mistaken for the letter *e* itself; hence *crie*, *flic*, *ladie*, as also *longe*, *fittie*, *winde*, *wonne*, &c. and *e*, in the first concoction a superfluous and unmeaning tack, became a favourite termination at the desk and at the press, and an appendage to half the words in the language. But still it remains to account for the substitution of *y*. In order to this we must look into ancient orthography, of which Johnson in his grammar, already referred to, has given various specimens; the following, according to Sir Thomas Smith's scheme, as improved by Dr. Gill, will suffice for the present.*

The

* Sir Thomas Smith, who flourished early in the 16th Century, was Secretary of State under Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth; admitted of the Privy Council; three times Ambassador to France, and esteemed the ablest scholar and philosopher of his time. He was author of several valuable

Vndankful wret, said he, iz Dis &c mjd,
 Wic wic her soverain merri Dou dust quit?
 Dj liff rj saved bj her gracios djd;
 But Dou dust wen wid vilanus dispt.
 Tu blot her honor, and her heavnly libt. &c.

The lines are Spencer's, in modern orthography thus:

Unthankful wretch, said he, is this the meed,
 With which her sovereign mercy thou dost quite?
 Thy life she saved by her gracious deed;
 But thou dost ween with villanous despight,
 To blot her honour, and her heav'nly light, &c.

By comparison of these two different modes of writing, it decisively appears that ij, jay, long i, or i consonant, as some still call it, had in old times, however different from the present acceptation, the power of *e* or *ee*; and like the long *f* and short or small *s* in modern use, *j* and *e* were but different marks for the same sound, applied at the discretion or whim of the writer; of course the words *crie*, *flie*, *ladie*, &c. which was the adopted spelling as before shewn, would be written with *ij*, *crij*, *flij*, *ladij*, the long *e*, or *j*, being preferred by Scriveners as a better finishing letter, and more calculated to shew command of hand, — a very silly affectation judiciously exploded by the moderns. This the printers in vogue, accustomed to their old Saxon type, mistaking for *y*, the only letter in the alphabet of that tongue distinguished with a dot or tittle over it, adopting the Roman character, put a real *y* in its place, as *cry*, *fly*, *lady*, &c. hence the general reception of *y* at the end of words, Q. E. D. But no temptation to flourish occurring when the letter *s* was to follow, (the short *e* being more commodious for joining) the plural of nouns, and the third person of the present tense indicative of verbs remained in *statu quo* without alteration, as *cries*, *flies*, *ladies*, &c. and this accounts for the seeming irregularity in that respect: — I say seeming irregularity; for *y* or *j* being but a sort of contraction for *ij* or *ie*, *crys*, *erjs*, *crijs*, and *cries*, are virtually the same, and the casual *s*, by grammatical inflection, regularly applied; consequently *cries*, *flies*, *ladies* and all of that class are strictly analogical, and by no means to be

P

considered

luable works, and, like Swift, a genius of more modern eminence, was anxiously solicitous for the improvement and perfection of his native language. He left an ingenious tract concerning the correct writing of the English Tongue, and the true founding of the letters, from which the celebrated Dr. Gill, Master of St. Paul's, derived his theory.

considered as anomalies in our tongue: *y* is also retained in the middle of some words upon etymological principles---chiefly in derivatives from the Greek.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, and the bustle made by grammarians about these two equivocal letters, *w* and *y*, Dr. Holder and Dr. Wilkins, two able critics who made alphabetic writing their peculiar study, consider them as wholly useless characters, and as well as *C*, *H*, *J*, *Q*, and *X*, are for rejecting them altogether: that would be to create a new language, at least as to books; a piece of literary Quixotism fit only for the enterprizing genius of a Plalmanazar. But taking them as they at present stand, a constituent part of the written language, from which it would now be in a manner impracticable to discard them, it is proper to ascertain their true character, as marks of certain elementary sounds, and the purposes to which they are subservient in the graphic art, which shall be fully shewn when I come to speak of diphthongs.

2d. Their Names. Letters being the most simple elements of speech, ought therefore to be distinguished by the most simple names, and such only as indicate their several powers; in which respect the Roman alphabet, used in these western parts of the world, has pre-eminently the advantage. For what could be more foreign or absurd than to express the simple elements by words of several syllables, from which no idea of their powers can be collected, as in the Greek, Hebrew, and all other alphabets hitherto known among us, the Roman only excepted. The aboriginal Irish severally distinguished their letters by the names of particular trees and herbs, for which it must be presumed they had a singular predilection; from the inconveniences of which, by the adoption of the Roman usage, we are in a great measure exonerated; yet we are not wholly relieved from inaccuracies in this respect, which, trifling as they may appear, have occasioned much difficulty and perplexity. The difference prevailing among the English, Scotch, and Irish, as to the name of the first letter of the alphabet, runs through their whole speech, and stamps a national characteristic upon their vernacular idiom, already noticed and too well known to need farther animadversion here.

This has sometimes been the cause of whimsical mistakes on the Hibernian side of the water, among your fine speakers, who hypercritically affect the English manner: for occasion, they

they say okeefion; for packet, peckit; and for days, dees. A gentleman remarkable for choice ale, of which he had various sorts at his side-board, pressed a lady at table to try some of them; the lady declined it, saying, "I have no okeefion for eny at present, end never teeste eels of eny kind." A plain spoken English lady present, not having heard what went before, catching up the last words, said, "I join you there, Ma'am, eels are my aversion, they look so like snakes." To which the lady replied, "I protest, Meme, I don't understend you, its my feet to be misteeken; I reely keen't see where's the enellegy betwixt eel and sneekes." This was being too Anglified; something, perhaps, like what the Athenian Herb-woman meant, when, in answer to Theophrastus's question, for he plumed himself on his speaking, "how she knew him to be a stranger?" she told him "he was too Attical." But this is not a very common fault; the Irish are in general strictly grammatical, and among the best educated natives in both countries, the mode of pronunciation is nearly the same.—As a farther proof of the importance of distinguishing letters, as well as other things, by distinct and adequate names, we may adduce the semi-vowel *v*, *ev* or *vee*. This letter and its neighbour, the vowel *u*, were formerly indiscriminately used under one and the same name, common to both *u*, *ëö*, or *ëö*, as in the more modern alphabet, now exclusively assigned to the vowel; thus vinegar would be articulated, as indeed it often appeared on paper, uinegar, or winegar; veal, ueal, pronounced weal. This simple circumstance in ages long past, gave birth to a vicious mode of pronunciation, which infects the speech of at least two-thirds of the native inhabitants of the metropolis of England, where it mostly prevails, to this day: thus for 'vinegar and veal make very good victuals, I vow;' a cockney, substituting the sound of *u*, which he had been taught to call *v*, by an association of ideas no way unnatural, says, 'winegar and weal make very good wictuals I wow;' a defect which most of the Shires, and the Irish in general, who universally call it *vee*, cannot be charged with. The letter *f*, which is formed by the same organs as the semi-vowel *v*, *vee*, the cockneys never mispronounce; because they were instructed from the beginning to call it by the true name, *ef*, expressive of its power, and continue the same in their syllabication, which consequently maintains its power in the course of delivery throughout.

When

When they had occasion to speak of *u* and *v*, in contradistinction merely as letters in their separate state, *v* was called *u* sharp, alluding to its figure, or more commonly *u* consonant; but it was a distinction purely nominal without reference to its due application or power, in the same way that *j* was called long *i*, or *i* consonant; for in both instances the characters were indifferently used, one for the other, as we have already seen.* The significant appellatives *jod*, or more properly *jay* or *edge*, and *vee* or *ev*, are comparatively of modern adoption.

There is a manifest absurdity in the names by which we distinguish several of the letters reputed consonants, viz. *H*, *W*, *Y*, *Z*. The first of these (at least the figure) borrowed from the Greeks, though with them it held a quite different rank and power, is with us a mere simple auxiliary aspiration; yet the name we give it contains an uncouth combination of five characters, not one of them in the remotest degree significant of its use or application [*aitch*], by which means it perhaps attained its place in the alphabet as a letter itself. *W*, which we retain from the Saxon, though a simple sound and evidently vocal, we call occasionally a consonant, and denote it by a name of three syllables, and no less than seven letters, not one of them expressive of its power [*double u*], though as a double vowel one might conclude it not a consonant: it should be called *ö* as we sound *oo* in *tool*, a name expressive of its power.

The ambiguity and confusion occasioned by calling the semi-vowel, *v*, [*vee* or *ev*,] by the same name as we call the vowel *u*, or at times somewhat more definitely *u* consonant, superinduced a complication of errors in respect of *w* also: for under the mistaken notion as already shewn, that *w* was merely the *v* or *u* consonant doubled, *vv* or *vv*, it was called by a name in allusion to its figure, double *u*; a mistake to which their contiguity in the alphabetic series very possibly contributed; and what is still more whimsical, they were not unfrequently promiscuously applied.

* The following relick of ancient prejudice is a recent and striking instance of the fantastic mode of typography alluded to.

HERMES; OR, A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY CONCERNING UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR, BY JAMES HARRIS, ESQ. LONDON PRINTED BY JOHN Nourse and PAUL VAILLANT. MDCCLII.

A more copious specimen from different authors is given in a subsequent page.

plied. The common way of writing up and upon was, vp and vpon; for laurel, lawrel; for unfavoury fauce, vnsauorie sawce; for love, lou; and at this hour (anciently howre) for *above*, we have *abou*; as all the milk-maids in London can testify unto *jov* [or *cou*, for you,] so spelled in an old miscellany now in my possession; and in another, *allauie*, for all away, more than once. Hence probably arose the idle conceit that *w* was of an amphibious nature, sometimes a vowel and sometimes a consonant; a consonant, like *v*, at the beginning of a word, but retaining, like *u*, its vocal power in its usurped station at the end; a solecism, which grammarians, not venturing to think for themselves, or tinged perhaps with the popular prejudice, have since endeavoured most strenuously to support. Hence, also, *w* obtained a general preference at the end of words; for, as we have seen, it was a practice with our Scribes of ancient date, when grammatical learning was in its infancy, if they wanted to give force to a final syllable, or with more precision to ascertain the sound of a preceding letter, however inartificially, to double the letter subsequent, *excell*, *penn*, *redd*, *tell*, *trick*, *c* and *k* being in the last instance the same; In like manner, finding *u* and *v*, both in writing and speaking, constantly confounded, and that *u* at the end of words, as in other cases, might be mistaken for *v*: thus according to the old orthography, *allou* would be pronounced *allov*; *borrov*, *borrov*; which was not only of more difficult utterance, but perhaps became obsolete, and a mark of vulgarity, of which even in this age of refinement examples might be produced; to put the matter out of doubt, those early reformers had recourse to the usual expedient—that of doubling the letter; in this instance *u*, [*vu*] for which both in name and acceptation *w* was a convenient substitute ready to their hand: Our calling of it double *u*, is mere prejudice of education, of all prejudices the most inveterate, imbibed, no doubt, from our quondam school dames, who reigned with absolute controul, the sole conductors of infant seminaries; and had the honour of instilling into our brightest luminaries, even Shakespear, Milton, Newton and Dr. Johnson himself, the elements of literature. The form of the letter was particular and striking; but as it can hardly be divined those venerable gentlewomen were deeply read in the philosophy of sounds, or troubled themselves much about the precepts of Quintilian, they consulted mother wit, and christened it from

its appearance on the Sampler, or peradventure the signature enchased with a skewer on the rim of an Apple-pye: such are the fruits of irregular institution, and thus are we bewildered by incompetent instructors!

In like manner, y we call by a name containing three vowels rapidly pronounced, or a triphthong *ôâë*, or *öäë*, though in our grammars and spelling books it is called wy; in either way, without reference to its true sound or peculiar designation in the structure of syllables and words, which has occasioned such a strange jumble of opinions, that this, as well as the letter w, may be called the opprobrium of grammarians; for to this day it is not decisively agreed whether they are vowels or consonants. Z, commonly called zed or izzard [*s* hard], is almost as unaccountably circumstanced, and its real nature and property little better determined or understood. It should be called ez.

The naming of some of the consonants with the vowel prefixed, and others by subjoining the vowel, I take also to be an impropriety. It is true the consonants are not all of the same quality, some being sonorous and others occlude, which naturally divides them into different classes, which it is alledged that method of naming them is intended to point out, though it has neither been strictly adhered to, nor is it all adequate to the end; for it is founded on a mistake, by which, as shall be presently shewn, some of the sonorous consonants have been deemed mute, and those really occlude have been erroneously esteemed sonorous, as in the case of F, V, S, Z, &c. thus the distinction is rendered futile, and of no moment or use in practice, to which indisputably it should have reference. In naming the consonants therefore of every description, I have uniformly placed the vowel foremost, not only to avoid the confusion attending the common method of sometimes putting it before, and sometimes after, but because we are thereby the better enabled to ascertain the relative position of the organs, and by that means to discover and determine the characteristic difference and properties of letters; for by giving the vowels the lead we may continue the organs in the same position at pleasure, and so have time to consider their use and application in the sound of any of the letters, as *eb*, *ep*, *ev*, which do not so clearly appear when the vowel succeeds, as *be*, *pe*, *ve*; in which case the organs are instantly dissevered; the consonant part vanishes, and the vowel only is heard. This, to superficial ob-

servers,

servers, may seem of little or no consequence; but I can say from experience, that if more generally adopted it would be found one of the best means of preventing fluttering, and of curing many impediments of speech which have been hitherto thought irremediable.

The point now to be considered is,

3d. The Order in which the letters of the alphabet ought to be disposed. This is a matter which, for the ease and advantage of the learner, merits particular attention, though hitherto, like the rest, it has been left wholly to chance.

The vowel A, with singular propriety, takes its station at the head of every alphabet; we bring it with us into the world; it is the first sound we utter, it announces our admission into society, and with an emphasis universally understood, it at once makes its way to the heart, and awakens the tenderest emotions of humanity. It is the offspring of necessity, which in the first instance prefers our claim to pity and protection, and, as a memorial of our original state of weakness, mingles with the kindred affections through life. In the order of arrangement the vowels indisputably should be reckoned by themselves, as being of a distinct species, and ought to have precedence from their priority in nature, necessity and consequence, also as being of the most immediate and easiest acquisition. They are formed simply by the opening of the mouth, and in regulating their order it seems most proper to rank them according to their different degrees of apertion, beginning with the widest, and so proceeding by a regular scale of approximation to the least.

No. XV.

â, à, â, ê, ô, ô, é, î, û,

or

ä, a, ä, ë, o, ö, e, u.

The three last being absolutely short and never terminating a syllable without a consonant actually or virtually succeeding, give place to all others, as being of inferior value and less obvious to perception.

After

After the vowels the consonants take place, and of these the sonorous should precede, as approaching nearest to the vowels, beginning with the labials and so proceeding through the dentals to the palatals; the latter requiring some degree of previous instruction and exercise, their feat of articulation not being altogether so perceptible as in the former classes, which consequently renders them more difficult of acquisition. The class called Nasals, because pronounced partly through the nose, I place the last in succession, being more complicated in their nature and requiring more care in the teacher as well as attention in the learner, to prevent a very great and not uncommon defect in utterance known by the disgraceful epithet of snuffling. According to the mode of arrangement here recommended, the consonants will stand in the order following:

No. XVI.

b, p, v, f, d, t, th, th, z, f, zh, sh, g, k, l, r,
 eb, ep, ev, ef, ed, et, eth, eth, ez, es, ezh, esh, eg, ek, el, er,
 m, n, ng, nk.
 em, en, eng, enk.

Children taught in this way will necessarily acquire a distinct articulation, which is the foundation of good speech, and which if it be not laid in the first simple elements with the utmost care and exactness, Quintilian, one of the best judges of Antiquity, does not scruple to pronounce, that whatever superstructure you may attempt to raise on it must fall.

Having said all that appears at present necessary as to the figure, names, and order, or alphabetic arrangement of letters, the next thing that offers itself for our consideration is,

4th, Their affinity. This is a matter that need not be very particularly dwelt upon: That the vowels as well as the consonants, have respectively their relations and generally run in pairs, must already have been perceived from what has been incidentally premised; in that partly consists their affinity, which will more forcibly appear under the following head, which requires minuter investigation.

5th. Their pronunciation. To this point all the former are but preparatives, and to its perfection ultimately tend. Pronunciation

nunciation is the vivifying principle ; it adds energy and beauty to thought, and, if I may be allowed the expression, is the music of speech ; and as all the charms of melody and harmony depend on the precision and facility with which, by instruction, practice, observation and natural aptitude we are enabled to execute the notes of the Gamut or musical alphabet, so all the delicacies, graces, and beauties of speech depend upon the facility and precision, with which by the same means we are enabled to express the elementary sounds of which language is composed.

Having for this purpose previously settled the number of our simple sounds, and removed the various obstacles in our way, to proceed on sure grounds, I shall now enquire into their nature, and shew in what respects they differ. They differ from each other in two respects ; 1st, in Sound ; 2dly, in Time. The former I shall call the quality, the latter the quantity of the letters ; and first of the quality, beginning with the vowels as before, and thence proceeding to the consonants.

That in the article of quality the vowels differ from each other, in other respects beside the mere diversity of sound, will at once be evident upon comparing the effects which their sounds produce upon the organs of hearing, some of them making a more forcible impression, filling or pleasing the ear more than others ; hence the difference in point of quality is to be considered with respect to strength or weakness, fulness or exility, sweetness or harshness.

As these several properties depend chiefly upon the seat of their formation, the vowels have in all languages been divided by grammarians into three classes, according to the different seat of their formation, the throat, the palate, and the lips, whence they have received the names of guttural, palatal, and labial. This distinction has been preserved by the English grammarians also, though not with equal propriety, as perhaps, strictly speaking, we cannot be said to have any guttural vowels. The seat of the formation of those vowels which are called guttural, is very different in different nations and languages ; in some the first seat of articulation where these vowels are formed, lies in the throat itself, underneath the small passage through which all sound is emitted ; the voice after having been articulated in this low seat does not find an easy passage through the mouth, but is drawn up to the roof, from which part of it only issues, and part is reverberated into the throat, which has given rise

to the common expression of speaking in the throat; the disagreeable effect of which is sensibly perceived by every ear not accustomed to such sounds, in which the Irish, the German, the Northern tongues, and those of most barbarous nations abound. It is in uttering these guttural sounds that one of the most striking faults of the Scotch pronunciation of many English words is perceived, as in *daughter*, for dawter; nor can an Englishman advanced in life be taught to pronounce sounds of this kind: for instance, the word *lough* (the name for a lake in Ireland,) is sounded by them *lock*; for in the pronunciation of their own tongue they never form any sounds in that low guttural seat, in which the voice has obstacles to encounter with, but have pitched upon that part of the inside of the mouth, which is nearest to the small passage of the throat through which the voice issues, for the first seat of articulation; and the sounds formed in this seat find a ready and clear passage through the lips, and come out full and distinct, without being broken and rendered confused by any reverberation, as in the other seat. The sounds formed in this seat are strongest and fullest; strongest, because the voice strikes with greater force against that part which is contiguous to the small aperture whence it issues, than it does against any at a greater distance;—and fullest, because they are formed with the largest aperture of the jaws and lips, so that there is a larger concavity for the sound to spread itself within the mouth, and a larger aperture for its emission. Though these vowels are not formed in the throat, but rather on the extremity of the palate which joins to the orifice of the throat, yet for the sake of distinguishing them from such as are formed in that part of the palate that is more advanced towards the teeth, they may still retain the denomination of guttural.—The next seat of articulation is that which I have just mentioned, the space which lies between the extremes of the palate; in forming vowels in this seat, the jaws approach more nearly to each other than in the former, even until they come almost into contact. The third seat of articulation is the lips, by the different contraction of which and consequential degrees of aperture different vowels are produced. Now to reduce the vowels to these three classes; but first I must observe that it is not necessary to the present design to take notice of the short vowels in this respect, as the pronunciation of them is too rapid to occasion any great attention to their quality, and therefore it is their quantity, of which the ear chiefly takes notice;

notice ; it is only in those of longer duration that there is time to form comparisons of their several powers in point of sound. On which account, to avoid multiplying unnecessary distinctions, I shall reduce the long vowels only to their classes, in the following manner :

Guttural.	Palatal.	Labial.
ā fall.	ē there.	ō môte.
ā fār.	ē hère.	ō mōve.

In sounding the vowels according to the above order, the seat of articulation is continually advancing from that part of the palate which is contiguous to the aperture of the throat, quite to the lips. The sound ā, is formed in the seat nearest to the throat, and with the widest aperture of the jaws and lips ; near to that, but a little advanced and with somewhat less aperture of the mouth, is long ā formed ; more advanced towards the middle of the palate, and with the like degrees of distance and aperture, are the two palatal vowels ē and ē formed, the distance still encreasing, and the aperture lessening until the jaws almost arrive at the point of contact ; ē being the last sound formed within the teeth, the seat of articulation is advanced to the lips, where the same degrees of distance and aperture are observed as in the two other species of vowels ; ō, being formed by the inside of the lips with a wider orifice, ô, by the middle of the lips and with a smaller aperture. By this scale, upon the principles before laid down, we may adjust the different degrees of power in the several vowels, with respect to fulness and strength ; for it will follow, that ā being made in the first seat of articulation nearest to the passage of the voice from the throat, and with the largest aperture of the mouth, is a fuller and stronger sound than ā long, and for the same reason, ā, than ā, and ā than ē.

The great difference in the power of the vowels that are formed in the concavity of the mouth, or within the teeth, according to the seat of their formation, will be manifested in the most striking manner to the ear ; not by sounding them in a regular gradation, but by taking the two extremes and sounding them after each other, as ā, ē, ē, ā. Who does not immediately perceive the fulness and strength of one vowel, and the exility and weakness of the other ?

But in estimating the powers of the labial vowels comparatively with the rest and each other, we must proceed by a new ratio,

ratio, as the different apertures of the lips as well as the jaws are here to be taken into consideration ; whereas the lips had no motion or position of their own in the rest, which depended entirely on those of the jaws.

It is a principle previously established, that the strength of the vowels is in proportion to the contiguity of their seat to the passage through which the voice issues from the throat ; but it is not so with respect to fulness : the position holds only with regard to vowels formed within the teeth ; we must proceed by a new ratio in regard to the labials, both as to fulness and strength. For, though it has been justly laid down as a rule, that the different degrees of fulness in the vowels, were proportioned to the different apertures of the jaws ; and, at first view it may be imagined, that the labials being formed wholly by the lips, must be inferior in fulness to any that are formed within the teeth, whose sound is aided by the concavity of the mouth ; yet upon examination, it will appear, that the different apertures of the jaws, combining with the lips in forming these vowels, have a very sensible effect, and give them additional power. In the utterance of *ô*, (*ö*) the jaws are in fact opened to the same extent as in that of *ä*, (*å*) and the voice, thus accumulated within the greatest concavity of the mouth, forces its way to the seat of articulation, the lips, forming themselves into somewhat of the shape of a speaking trumpet, where the sound, collected as it were into a focus, immediately bursts forth ; consequently *ô*, (*ö*) like *ä* (*å*) to which it is akin, is superior in fulness to any of the other vowels formed by a less aperture of the jaws. This process of the voice being attended with some degree of constraint, and therefore requiring more of exertion, the vowel *ô*, (*ö*) is universally used as an interjection expressive of particular emotion, wonder, sorrow, or pain, to which it seems by nature peculiarly adapted : *ö* (*ö*) in like manner, originating in the same aperture as used in forming *ä* long, though inferior in fulness to *ô*, (*ö*) as issuing through a more contracted orifice of the lips, is superior in that respect to any of the palatals, where the sound is in the first stage repressed by a closer approximation of the constituent organs.

Now to consider the consonants in the same way ; the first great distinction between consonants, is, that some of them have a sound of their own, which may be perceived either before articulation when they precede a vowel, or may be continued after articulation, when they follow one in a syllable.

This

This gives rise to the first general division of consonants into mutes and semi-vowels, a distinction well known to the ancients, but scarcely adverted to by modern grammarians ; a mute is a consonant that has no sound of its own ; a semivowel, one that has : as every vowel must necessarily have a sound belonging to it, such of the consonants as resemble them in that respect by a sound of their own, are, on that account, called semivowels.

The mutes have no sound but what is communicated to them by the vowels or semivowels, and they are formed entirely by different positions of the organs modifying the sounds of the vowels or semivowels in different ways ; on a general division, upon this principle our consonants may be classed in the following manner :

<i>Mutes, 11.</i>					<i>Semivowels, 9.</i>		
B.	D.	F.	G.	K.	L.	M.	N.
P.	S.	T.			R.	V.	Z.
Sh.	Th[th]	Nk.			Zh.	Th.	Ng.

These consonants, both mutes and semivowels, differ from each other in another respect, which is, that in the formation of some of them, a perceptible effort of the breath is necessary, known by the name of aspiration, in others not ; this gives rise to a second division, into simple and aspirated mutes and semivowels.

<i>Simple Mutes, 7.</i>				<i>Simple Semivowels, 5.</i>		
B.	D.	G.		L.	M.	N.
K.	P.	T.	Nk.	R.	Ng.	

<i>Aspirated Mutes, 4.</i>			<i>Aspirated Semivowels, 4.</i>		
F.	S.		V.	Z.	
Sh.	Th[th]		Zh.	Th.	

The simple semivowels L. M. N. R. were called by the ancients liquids ; but as they had none of the aspirated kind in their tongue, they are at present without a name, I shall therefore call them aspirated semivowels.

The

The mutes may again be divided into pure and impure; the pure mutes, are such as have no sound at all of their own; the impure, such as have a little sound after a vowel, though not before one, but which cannot be long continued.

Pure Mutes.

K. P. T.

Impure Mutes.

B. D. G.

The sound of ek, ep, et, cannot be continued, those of eb, ed, eg, may, but for a very short space; the liquids had their name from uniting easily with the mutes, and flowing with them as it were, in the same syllable, while such an union was impossible to many of the mutes, and the pronunciation of such as would admit of it, was in many cases very difficult.

Thus bla, cla, bra, cra, are easy sounds, while it is impossible any sound should be produced from a junction of bk, db, gp; and in such mutes as have been united in our tongue as pt, kt, &c. the pronunciation is difficult before a vowel, though not after; on which account they never begin syllables in our tongue, though they are often heard in the end, as in apt, act, &c.

We come now to examine how the consonants differ from each other, with respect to quality or nature of their sounds; and here we shall find, that the difference is exactly the same as in the vowels, in point of strength or weakness, fulness or exility, sweetness or harshness. As these qualities also depend chiefly on the seat of their formation, let us class the consonants accordingly.

The vowels were divided into guttural, palatal and labial; but in the division of consonants, the distinction of guttural should be omitted, as we have none in English formed in the lower seat of the palate near the throat like the vowels, and in its room should be substituted that of dental.

For though the teeth are no way concerned in the formation of vowels, yet they are necessary to produce the sounds of some of the consonants, which are therefore divided into palatal, dental and labial.

Mutes.

Palatal, G. K. T. Nk.

Dental, D, S, Sh, Th[th]

Labial, B, F, P.

Semivowels.

L, N, R, Ng.

Zh, Z, Th.

M, V.

The

The palatals are such as are formed before the voice reaches the teeth; the dentals, such as are produced by the tongue touching the teeth, or the voice and breath striking against them, and the labials are formed either entirely by the lips, as B, P, M, or by the application of the lower lip to the upper teeth, as F, V.

To point out the different uses of these distinctions, would require private instruction and practice; but the quality or different powers of sound in the consonants may be sufficiently shewn, to answer the purpose of a general view, in a shorter way, by having recourse to the former division of them into mutes, semivowels, &c. while in the latter one of palatal, dental and labial, I have only opened a way for such as are desirous of it, to carry their speculations farther on this head.* It must be evident, from their very nature, that the semivowels, having sounds belonging to them, which may be continued *ad libitum*, are preferable in all properties of sound to the mutes; that the simple mutes modifying the sounds of the vowels and semivowels, have more of sweetness and fulness to the ear, than those of the aspirated kind; as the latter, having the force of the breath superadded, have more of strength. In the same way the simple semivowels also have more of sweetness and fulness, as they consist of pure sounds; while the aspirated, for the reason above mentioned, are more forcible.

Of the simple mutes, the impure, which have some little sound of their own, are preferable to the pure which have none.

Of the liquids, L, N, and Ng, have the sweetest and fullest sounds; M and R, the most forcible.

The sound of L, flowing in an equable manner, through the mouth only, is the most pleasing of all; next to that, is Ng, whose sound passes partly through the mouth and partly through the nose; but neither with the strength or liquidity of the other; the sound of M, being formed by a close pressure of the lips, which prevents any sound issuing through the mouth, and of course, forces it entirely through the nose, is less sweet, though

* Those who wish to see a more particular analysis of the manner of applying the organs in the formation of the several consonants, may consult Dr. Holder's Elements of Speech, a small octavo, London printed for John Martyn, Printer to the Royal Society, 1699; or that still more curious and elaborate work of Dr. Wilkins's, entitled an Essay towards a Real Character, which issued from the Society's Press, the year before.

though more forcible than any of the former ; and R, being formed by a strong tremulous motion of the end of the tongue, has more of force and less of sweetness, than any of the liquids.

The comparative value of the consonants to each other, may therefore be estimated by the following scale :

Simple Mutes,

Impure.

B, D, G, preferable to the
Pure

K, P, T, Nk, in fulness and
sweetness of Sound ; both
inferior in strength to the
Aspirated Mutes.

F, S, Sh, Th[th]

Simple Semivowels.

L, N, Ng, superior in sweetness,
but inferior in strength to
M, R.

Aspirated Semivowels.

V, Z, Zh, Th, inferior in sweetness,
but superior in strength to
the three first ; superior in sweetness,
not equal in strength to the
two last.

It is to be observed, that the aspirated mutes F and S, are formed exactly by the same position of the organs as the aspirated semivowels V and Z, the only difference is, that the mutes are formed by the breath only ; F, by blowing ; S, by hissing ; while the semivowels have the sound of the voice superadded and blended with that of the breath, as V, Z. For proof of this, after sounding the semivowels with the aid of the voice, let the voice stop, and the breathing continue, and the corresponding mutes will be produced of course, without any change in the position of the organs, as V, F, Z, S. The case is exactly parallel between the other four Sh, Zh, th, Th.

Having examined the quality of our consonants, it will now appear, that the six letters which we have more than the Greeks, have greatly enriched our tongue, both in point of sweetness and strength.

We have added to us one of the finest sounding liquids, Ng.

We have four aspirated semivowels, V, Z, Zh, Th, and one aspirated mute, Sh.

Two of the aspirated semivowels, V and Z, are superior in sweetness to two of the liquids M and R, and all of them inferior in strength to all other consonants, excepting R ; and the aspirated mute Sh, is superior in force to any of the simple mutes.

Having adjusted the quality of all our simple sounds, vowels as well as consonants, I now proceed to examine the other
article,

article, in which our letters differ from each other, I mean that of quantity; and, first, with respect to the vowels.

Of these we have three necessarily short, two that may be called long, as they are generally pronounced so in our tongue, and the rest common, being as often used in a short as a long quantity, which may be seen by the following scheme:

Short.		Long.	
ê	Bet,	â	Hate,
î	Bit,	ô	Note.
û	Cub.		
Common,			
Short.		Long.	
â	Hât,	â	Father,
ô	Fôlly,	â	Fâll,
ý	Lovely,	ê	Hê,
û	Pûll.	ô	Pool.

Of these the short are made by a single smart stroke of the voice against the seat of their formation, and cannot possibly have their sounds prolonged, on which account they are never founded alone, nor ever end a syllable, but have always a consonant following them, upon which the voice rests, without which they would be disagreeable to the ear, as

ê, î, û, bê, bl, cû.

The long vowels â, ô, are not in their own nature necessarily long, as they can be founded short, but this is done in so few words in our language, that they may well go under the denomination of long. The sounds of the common vowels in either quantity are every where to be found throughout our language, only the short sounds are more predominant.

The common vowel â, is always marked by the same character, whether in its short or long quantity. The short sound of â, is generally marked by an o, as fall, folly. The short sound of ê is usually marked by a y at the end of a word, or an i, in any other situation, and the short sound of ô, by a, u. As to the consonants, their quantity is easily adjusted; as there are three vowels necessarily short, so are there three consonants, and these are the pure mutes, k, p, t, to which may be added nk, ink; the sounds of the impure mutes may be continued for a short time, and the sounds of the aspirated mutes, and all the semivowels

R

may

may be prolonged while the breath or voice lasts ; but there is no consonant necessarily long ; that is, there is not any which may not be pronounced in as short a space of time as the pure mutes ; consequently all consonants excepting these are common.

I shall now exhibit a general Scheme of the Alphabet at one view ; but it will be of advantage previously to call to mind a practical observation or two. That there is an affinity prevailing among the consonants is, by the laws of Orthoepy, sufficiently proved ; most of them having respectively its correlative, formed precisely in the same way, and differing only by the greater or less degree of force or pressure given to the organs in the act of utterance ; hence arises a twofold distribution of the consonants into sonorous and occlude, and these are properly enough distinguished by the names, semivowels and mutes.

A semivowel is a consonant formed by a gentle appulse of the organs employed, in such a way, as to admit a partial emission of the voice, and like a vowel, from which circumstance the name is derived, can be continued at pleasure.

A mute is a consonant formed by one smart compression of the organs brought into close contact, intercepting the voice in the instant of utterance ; as the sound of any single note on the harpsichord is born, and dies the instant the quill passes the string.

If any subsequent admixture of breath be perceived in either semivowel or mute, they are said to be aspirated, which is peculiar to a few of each class ; but it is the accession or deprivation of voice which constitutes their essential difference, and renders them semivowels or mutes.

Upon the accuracy and precision with which these actions are performed, greatly depend the distinctness and perfection of articulation ; but mere speculation must not supersede practice ; the most ingenious theorist will admit that no verbal description on paper, however helpful, can convey adequate ideas of oral sounds, or enable us to utter them with the habitual ease and precision, so necessary and ornamental in the commerce of life. That requires living example, with the guidance of an able instructor ; and, on the part of the student, a willing, docile mind, alive to his own deficiencies, and endued with suitable talents, attention, assiduity and perseverance ; requisites which can by no means be dispensed with, if any thing like proficiency be expected.

SYNOPSIS of the ALPHABET upon the Principles laid down in the preceding Pages.

Number of Simple Sounds in the English Language, 29, viz.

Vowels	9.	ä, a, ä, ë, ö, ö, e, i, u. hall, hat, hate, here, note, move, bet, bit, but.
Consonants	20.	b, p, v, f, d, t, z, s, th, th, f or z, sh. eb, ep, ev, ef ed, et, ez, es, eth, eth, ezh*, esh. g, k, l, r, m, n, nk, nk. eg, ek, el, er, em, en, eng, enk.
Superfluous	4.	c, having the power of k or s. q, having the power of k before u. w, of oo; and y, of e or i.
Compound	3.	j, which stands for dzh. g, in what is called its soft sound, for dzh, as in gentle, gin. x, for ks, or gz.
Ambiguous	5.	c, g, t, th, x, as in can, cit; give, gin; title nation; thine, thin; example, perplex; sever- ally assuming a little mark or cerilla for the sake of distinction.
Coupled	6.	th, th, sh, zh,* ng, nk.
Aspiration	1.	h, properly not a letter.

The Consonants divided into Mutes and Semivowels.

Mutes	11.	eb, ep, ef, ed, et, eg, ek, es, esh, eth, enk.
Simple Mutes	7.	eb, ed, eg, ek, ep, et, enk.
Aspirated Mutes	4.	ef, es, esh, eth.
Semivowels	9.	el, em, en, er, ev, ez, ezh, eth, eng.
Simple Semivowels	5.	el, em, en, er, eng.
Aspirated Semivls.	4.	ev, ez, eth, ezh.

Organically divided into

Labial	- - -	4.	eb, ep, ev, ef.
Dental	- - -	8.	ed, et, ez, es, eth, eth, ezh, esh.
Palatal	- - -	4.	eg, ek, er.
Nasal	- - -	4.	em, en, eng, enk.

Here

* For the sound of ezh, though frequently heard in our speech, we have no appropriate character; it is occasionally represented by s, or z, particularly between two vowels.

Here follow, as promised in a preceding page, some remarkable specimens of ancient orthography, Latin as well as English, for the use and entertainment of our younger readers.

Roberti Whitintoni alma in vniuersitate oxoniensi laureati de octo partibus orationis æditio. Prima trahit part: primordia diua loquēdi ad sociasq; huius ianua prima patet. Vber dis ales iungas ijs a pede nata. Cis fluuij aut montis proprijs dato, citra alijsq; . . . Dij deæ dijs sic ij eæ pluralis & ijdem. Londini in Ædibus VVinandi de VVorde.

Tityre tv patvlæ recvbans sub tegmine fagi,
Syluestrem tenvi Musam meditaris auena :—
Aspice, aratra ivgo refervnt suspensa iuueni.
Dic mihi Damoeta cuium pecvs. &c.
Arma uirvmq; cano, Troiæ qui primvs ab oris, &c.
Ego sic uivamq; tanqvam sciam alijs me natvm, &c.

Cicero and Cæsar were by the Greeks written Κικερω, [Kikero] and Καϊσαρ [Kaifar,] ; for IULIVS or JULIUS the Greeks wrote ΙΟΥΛΙΟΥΣ [IOULIÖS] and for VESPASIANUS, ΟΥΕΣΠΙΑΣΙΑΝΟΣ, [OUESPASIANOS] ; whence we may infer, that the true Roman pronounciation of Latin and ours very widely differ in other respects, as well as these. In a similar manner, some Northern Nations at this day, for Vistula say Wistula, for Volga Wolga ; also for Wilhelmina Vilhelmina ; and for Danube they write Danvbe.

Sir John Maundeville, more celebrated for his scholarship than his veracity, died upwards of 80, An. 1371 ; in the genuine Edition of his Book of Travels, writes bewtee, duellethe, mownt, saughe, sowked, rihtwise unrihtwiseness, &c. for beauty, dwelleth, mount, saw, sucked, righteous, unrighteousness, &c.

Robert Ashley was a traveller of somewhat later note ; in his Relation of the Kingdome of Cochín-China, he writes, I haue bin so often the vnworthee obiect of yovr generous goodness and vpon everij occation in vvhich I haue address'd miself, &c. also alluaie, cloues, daij, daijs, deuour, Iapan, Iaua, Indja, ioyning, Iuie, oual, saoury, saluages, viuacity, &c. for alway, cloves, day, days, devour, Iapan, Java, India, joining, Ivy, oval, sa-voury, savaes, vivacity, &c.

Sir

Sir John Fortescue, Lord Chief Justice, under Henry VI. who could not be a stranger to the orthography of his own time, affords among divers others, the following instances: applyd, bowndyn, esquyers, hys, hou, howfys, inough, yf, yll, Kyng, necessarijs, sufficiencytly, tymes, wyll, wessells, Westmentes, &c. for-applied, bounden, esquires, his, how, houses, enough, if, ill, king, necessities, sufficiently, times, will, vessels, vestmentes; also for queen, qwene and Cwen, which last, immediately from the Saxon, *Verstigan* interprets simply wife; perhaps emphatically applied to the consort of the King, *the wife*, as we now apply the word Bible, *the book*, by way of eminence, to the Holy Scriptures.

In a very ancient miscellaneous account of Britain, quarto, pp. 386, caret titulo, we have howen, houere, and heven, hwere, for when, where; hwatte, hwie, for what, why; VValdenfes, Vvaldenfes and VValdenfes *Uvaldenjes* for Waldenses; and VVickliffe, Vvickliffe, VVickliffe and Uvickliffe for Wickliffe. Hauing discovrsed &c. of impresses, coynes, monijs and diuerse vsful mattieres therein contained, the Avthovre under the heddle of VVittie Apothegemes and VVise Speeches in iustice to himselte ande eke in hjs goode iudgemente adiynethe.

This vsuall speech of Sir Thomas Moore, both of himself and other Book-breeders, which is also extant in an Epistle of his. I haue resolued to close vp this part. *Book-makers are full wise folke, who paine and pine themselves away by writing, to subiect themselves to the censure of such which in Ordinaries and in Alebenches will pill and pull them by their words, phrases, and lines, as it were by the beards; when some of them are so pild themselves, as that they haue not one haire of honesty; or to vse his owne words, Ne pilum boni hominis.* But these he resembleth to those unmannerly guests, which when they haue bin well and kindly entertained flinch away neuer giuing thanks, but deprauing and dispraising their curteous entertainment.

A reuerend Man, my first teacher, quoth likewise our old writer, did often admonish those that bin giuen to sorrow about worldlie disappointments sayinge *there bin two things no manne shoulde lette grieue him, that he cann helpe, and that he cann nott helpe.*

VVise also was that saying of Doctoure Medcalf, *For young men do thinke vs old men to be fooles; but we old men do know that you young men are fooles.*

OF DIPHTHONGS.

THERE is no article in which all who have written on the English Grammar, have been more mistaken than this of diphthongs; they seem entirely to have forgotten the meaning of the word, which signifies double sounding, and have only attended to the written language, and called those double sounding which are double written; were there another term for these, the error would soon be manifest; the latter should be called digraphs and not diphthongs. In order to shew this, let us first define what a true diphthong is. A true diphthong is the union of two vowels in one articulate sound, so as to constitute but one syllable, though the sound of each vowel be distinctly perceived by the skilful ear, in so much that he who hears it may be able to tell of what particular vowels it is composed; and the only test of a true diphthong is the natural and necessary production of such a sound, upon attempting to reduce two vowels so joined into one syllable; nor are all vowels capable of such a union, but only a few, which shall presently be shewn.

All the writers of Grammar are agreed in saying, six proper diphthongs and nine improper, because though in the latter two vowels are presented to the eye, the sound of one only is heard; for instance, the *ea* has four different sounds of simple vowels, in the words heart, swear, head, fear.

But for the same reason, most of those which they call proper diphthongs, must be excluded by every unprejudiced and skilful ear. The six proper diphthongs which they admit, are *ai*, *au*, *ei*, *oi*, *oo*, *ou*; of these only three are diphthongs, *ai*, *oi*, *ou*; the rest simple sounds, as has been already shewn in the scheme of the vowels; *ai* is a diphthong made up of the first sound of *ā*, and the short sound of *ē*, as represented by *y*. For proof of this let any one sound those two vowels slowly at first, and afterwards quicken the pronunciation gradually till they coalesce into one syllable, and he will perceive the diphthong to be the natural and necessary product of this attempt, as *a e*, *a e*, *a e*, *a e*, *ay*, *ai*; but this diphthong is at present scarce used in our language. Words where *ai* or *ay* are united in one syllable have the simple sound of second *a*, as in maid, frail; the old pronunciation
of

of maid, frail, being now exploded and considered as a country dialect. The diphthong oi is composed in the same manner of ä or ä, and ê, e or y, as ä ë, ä ë, äy, äi, öi, noise, joys.

The diphthong ou, or ow, is formed out of the 3d a, or ä and 3d o, or ö; three of them evidently stand for simple sounds, au for 3d a, or ä, as in Saul, the same sound as call, marked in the last by a single vowel; the two oo's for 3d o, as cool, prove.

If all this must be allowed, it follows to appearance, that we have but two diphthongs in our tongue, ai being now obsolete, and those are oi, or oy, as in noise, boys, and ou, or ow, as in out, owl, and consequently that our language is very defective in the article of diphthongs. But upon a closer examination it will appear that we have a greater number of diphthongs, and a greater variety, than perhaps any other tongue ever had, though through want of skill in sounds, our grammarians never considered or pointed them out as such.

In order to make this matter clear, it will be necessary to examine the nature of two characters which appear in our alphabet, that are not to be found in the Hebrew, Greek, Latin or French; I mean the w and y. The figure of the y indeed is found both in the Latin and French alphabets, but as it only supplies the place of the vowel i in certain situations, and is never put in either to the use which we make of it; it is to all intents and purposes a new character with us.

In classing these two letters, all our grammarians upon the authority of Wallis, have agreed to call them consonants, but the reasons assigned for this, are by no means conclusive; on the contrary, there are unanswerable objections to their being admitted into that class. It has been an indisputable point in all languages, that the sound of every consonant is distinguishable after every vowel, which their very name implies. Now let these two letters be tried by this rule, and if they have no proper sound of their own after any vowel whatsoever, but on the contrary assume the power of two vowels, the one of u and the other of i, how can they be classed with a species of letters from which they differ in so essential a point?

But it is said, that although they have no proper sound after a vowel, yet they have one peculiar to themselves before a vowel and mixing with them, can take in the following consonants, so

as to make one syllable, and that therefore they are consonants; but they who judge thus, forget that this is the very description of a vowel preceding another vowel, so as to form a diphthong, and therefore, it does not follow, that such letters are necessarily consonants.

On the other hand it may be urged, that if they are simple letters, they must be either vowels or consonants; and if, for the reasons before mentioned, they should be allowed not to be consonants, they must also be excluded from the class of vowels, if we cannot pronounce them by themselves in one simple sound, marking their nature and own peculiar power, which is the very essence of vowels. Now it is granted, that this is not done in the names assigned to these two letters of *w* and *y*, and if it cannot be done, it must be allowed that the argument against their being vowels will be equally conclusive with that against their being consonants; but this can be done, and their peculiar sounds as single vowels pointed out, as I shall presently shew. The want of a sufficient number of characters to mark the different sounds of our vowels, has been already clearly demonstrated; now let us see, whether these two characters in what is called their consonant state, be any thing else but marks of two single vowels enumerated in the scheme of vowels, which had before no peculiar characters to represent them. It is allowed that they are pure vowels when they end a word; as in that case, they only stand in the place of two others which have already characters, and therefore they are superfluous. Their consonant state, it is said, commences only when they begin a syllable or take in a vowel after them; thus, in the word *saw*, *w* is allowed to be a vowel, supplying the place of *u*, which in most situations, excepting at the end of a word, is used to represent the same sound that *w* has after a vowel, and this use of the *w* seems to have taken its rise from some fantastical mode of spelling in former times, which gave a preference to the *w*, at the end of many words, for no good reason that can be assigned, as some words still preserve the final *u*; such as *thou*, *you*; but in the words *want*, *thwart*, &c. the *w* is said to be a consonant. In like manner, *y* in the words *dry*, *ally*, &c. is allowed to be a vowel, supplying the place of *i*, and this seems also to have taken its rise from a fantastical mode of spelling, which laid it down as a rule, however puerile and unmeaning, that no word in our language should be seen to terminate with an *i*; but

but in the words young, ye, &c. it is a consonant. Now if I can point out two sounds of the vowels, as set down in the scheme, that have no peculiar characters to mark them, which preceding any other vowel and uniting with it, have necessarily the whole power and pronunciation that y and w are possessed of in the like situation, we shall be no longer at a loss to know what class they belong to. The truth is, that w is nothing more than the short sound of 3d o, or oo, as in boom, pool, represented often by u, as in bush, pull; and y the short sound of 3d e or ee, represented, as I already marked in the scheme, by the character y. For proof of this, let them be tried by the experiment before mentioned, as the test of a true diphthong; to begin with w, before 3d a or au, as in the word war, ð âr, ð âr, ð âr, ð âr, war; is not the sound war necessarily produced by this process. Now to try the same experiment with y, before the same vowel, as in yawl, e awl, e awl, e awl, e awl, yawl, is not a like effect, also necessarily produced.

The pronoun, you, and the name of our last vowel u, are in sound precisely the same; as are also the possessive, your, and the old word, ure, practice; the same may be observed of others; in both these instances y begins a word preceding a vowel, and yet is certainly not a consonant, any more than u, which also begins many words, as any one, in aid of his recollection, may find in his dictionary. If preceding a vowel at the beginning of a word constituted a consonant, the letter a in aid, must be a consonant also, and so must almost every one of our vowels which are occasionally applied in the same way. *

This

* By way of illustration accept a little story. When *Rich*, the Patentee Manager of Covent-Garden, first brought out his splendid pantomime of *Orpheus and Euridice*, the admirers of such entertainments, having conceived highly of its excellence, thronged from all quarters to see the exhibition. A country gentleman, who on the day of representation, had made a smart journey to town on horseback, hurried off to the theatre without making any alteration in his dress, and hustling into the boxes, told an acquaintance there before him, he was come to see *Orpheus*; and, rejoins the friend, pointing to his boots, *you rid I see*. Thus sportively helping out the title and obviating unnecessary explanations—Here is a case in point. If y preceding a vowel be, as some would have it, a consonant in the equivoque, *You-rid-I-see*; for the same reason e in *Euridice*, the name itself, must be a consonant also, since in sound they are precisely the same, and every vowel, Greek or English, is, occasionally in the same predicament, and subject to the

This sufficiently demonstrates the nature of those two letters, by the only sure test of sounds, the ear ; not the capricious rules of grammarians ; and as a farther confirmation of the truth of this, I will shew that even in writing, the two vowels i and u, for whose short sounds the characters y and w, stand in many words, produce exactly the same sounds ; u, supplies the place of w, after g and q, and often after s, as in the words language, quality, persuade, which sound as if written with a w, as language, qquality, perswade ; in the same manner, i is often put before a vowel in the place of y, as in the words endemious, impervious, valiant, sounded as if written endemyus, impervyus, valyant.

The want of knowing this has misled our grammarians in their manner of dividing syllables in all words of this structure, for they make as many syllables in them as they see vowels ; whereas the two vowels so situated, really form a diphthong, and consequently but one syllable. Accordingly our poets always use them as such, as in the word impervious, which is with them a word of three syllables only, and valiant but of two ; whereas, our grammarians make the former four, and latter three ; upon the same mistaken principle, they often divide a syllable into two where these vowels are sounded together. In writing they do not even form a diphthong, and thereby really but one sound of a simple vowel is heard in the pronunciation. Thus they reckon in the very last word I have uttered, five syllables, pro-nun-ci-a-ti-on, whereas the ear acknowledges but four, as the eye would also, if the word was spelt as it is pronounced, thus pro-nun-sta-shun. In the same manner they divide such words as ques-ti-on, bes-ti-al, into three syllables, though they are evidently but two, when spelt according to their sound, as ques-chun or ques-tshun, beschal or bestshal. Into many errors of this kind have they been led, by adopting rules from other tongues which are not at all fitted to ours. This rule they evidently took from the Latin,

the like metamorphoses ; a position, however extraordinary it may appear, that wants not right, grave, and learned authority to support it.—The following is a passage literally in print : “ The kingdom of consonants sinks and dissolves insensibly into that of vowels, in the same progressive manner as the kingdom of vowels rises by imperceptible degrees to that of consonants.” Thus vowels and consonants, each is both or either, as humours and conceits shall govern. What a capital discovery for the manufacture of punsters, the very essence and soul of whose art consists in the perversion of words and letters.

Latin, because in that language, the word *pronunciatio* was a word of six syllables and sounded so; *questio*, *bestia*, words of three; but they did not reflect, that when words of that class were adopted into our tongue, we changed their sounds by a general law, and made them conform to the English pronunciation, the *cia* of the Latin was changed into the English *sha*; the *tio*, into *cho* or *sho*, sounds unknown to the Romans, as words of this kind abound in our tongue. Nothing has contributed so much to mislead foreigners and provincials as that false rule adopted from the Latin. In consequence of which, I have known many to pronounce in that way, such as, what is the right pro-nun-si-a-si-on of that word? The ques-ti-on is how bes-ti-al; than which nothing could be more affected to an English ear, amongst whom it is ridiculed by the term of speaking fine.

It is to be observed, that the French have in their tongue, both the sounds that are formed by *w*, and *y*, when preceding some of the vowels, though they are marked by different characters. The *w* does not indeed appear in their alphabet, but their *ou* before a vowel, when forming a diphthong, produces exactly the same sound; *oui*, which signifies yes, in French, has exactly the same sound as, *we*, the pronoun plural of the first person with us. As this sound therefore, is never to be found in the French, but when either *o* or *u*, precede a vowel, and those two vowels have the sound of *oo*; it is evident that our *w*, is nothing more than a new character to stand for that sound when it forms a diphthong with a subsequent vowel.

Though in French, they have the character *y*, which they call *igrec*, yet it is hardly ever applied the same way as with us, that of forming a diphthong, which is generally done by *i*; and the French *y* seldom has any sound in their tongue, but what they give it in repeating their alphabet.*

Had

* A late French Grammarian, contending for the honour of his vernacular tongue, with, it must be confessed, some casual exceptions on the score of politesse, enumerates no less than forty-six diphthongs in French; with what precision the adepts must determine; I acknowledge myself incompetent to the complicated task. On the contrary, another, who after his name writes L. L. D. of the University of Paris, and roundly declares, "after a long course of residence and extensive conversation, he had found but one man of sense in all England," positively asserts, "there is not *one single* diphthong to be found in the French Language," and this, to adopt his own words, he demonstrates on the true principles of *Geometry*: with submission to this irrefragable Doctor, I should think *Algebra* would have been a term rather more german to the matter. "Who shall decide when Doctors disagree?"

Had our grammarians consulted theirs, they would have found that they reckon in their tongue eight true diphthongs, almost all of them beginning with *i* or *u*; now all these form exactly the same sounds, when united with vowels, as our *y*, and *w*, which one would think might have opened their eyes, and prevented their mistaking them for consonants.

Though the character *w*, be not found in the Roman alphabet, no more than in the French, yet the *u* supplied its place with them, and formed several diphthongs of the same kind, seven of which may be found in the article *qui*, *quæ*, *quod*, *quem*, *quam*, *quo* and *quum*; and this *u*, we have good reason to believe, was founded *oo* by them, in the manner as by the modern Italians, for *dôminûs*, as the English sound, they probably said *dôminôos*.

But with regard to the *i*, it was never put to the use of our *y* in forming diphthongs, as it was always sounded distinctly before a vowel, and formed a separate syllable; thus *questio*, *bestia*, were words of three syllables with them, and not reduced to two in the pronunciation, as with us in the words, *question*, *bestial*; *Virgilius* was four, and not *Virgilyus*, as pronounced by the English, which makes it but three; but it was not so with regard to the diphthongs formed by their *u*, instead of our *w*; *lingua*, like language with us, was a word of two syllables only, and *qualitas*, like quality, of three. There has been enough said to shew the nature of these two letters, and indeed our grammarians seem to have been puzzled chiefly by the names assigned them in repeating the alphabet. For had the *y* been called *ÿ*, as it is by the French *y grec*, and the *w*, *ÿ*, which they should have been (in order to mark their peculiar powers) there could have been no possible doubt of the class to which they must be referred.

By settling this point, there is laid open to our view, a treasure in our language, which had a veil thrown over it by our grammarians. For whereas, according to their rule, we should be able to make out but two or three proper diphthongs in our tongue, and those chiefly to be found in the middle or end of syllables; here we perceive a greater number than probably ever could be found in any other tongue, and those too, abounding in the beginning of syllables. No sounds enrich a tongue so much as diphthongs, which were called by the ancients *Euphonoî*, or well sounding; and by means of these characters, it will appear that we have no less than twenty-one different diphthongs formed, and all proper, as may be seen by the following scheme:

Diphthongs

Diphthongs formed by W.

a	waft,	wage,	war.
e	wed,		week,
i	wit,	wine,	
o	want,	woe,	woo.
u	word,	wolf.	

Diphthongs formed by Y.

a	yard,	yare,	yawl.
e	yet,		year.
o	yon,	yoke.	youth,
u	young.		

And these sounds are to be found intermixed throughout our language in the middle of syllables also, though in that case they are not marked by a W. and Y. but by U. and I. as in the words persuade, bestial, &c.

Now to examine the state of our other diphthongs, and first the two that appear in our alphabet as simple sounds, being marked by single characters the i and u.

Diphthongs are formed in three ways : 1st, where the greatest quantity of sound is given to the first vowel, as in ai, oi : 2dly. where it is given to the second as in u, and in all the diphthongs formed by short y, or w preceding, with a long vowel, yoke, year; ware, war : 3dly. Where the quantity is equally divided, as in i or ou, when pronounced in the shortest time; though when they are dwelt upon, the last vowel must be predominant as I, thou; and in all the diphthongs formed by y, and w, before an accented vowel. The value of diphthongs may be estimated by the quality and quantity of their compound vowels; thus oi, is better than i, because the greater proportion of sound in the former, is borrowed from the full broad a, or ā; and the latter from the slender ē. Ou, for the like reason, is better than u, because the first is made up of ā, ō, and the last of ē, ô. Oil is a better sound than *isle*, and *thou* than *you*; which is the reason that though the pronoun *thou*, be banished from discourse, it is still preserved by our writers of tragedy and epic poetry, as a sound of more dignity.

On the same account all diphthongs formed by w, are better sounding than those formed by y, as the labial ô, is preferable
to

to the palatal *ê*; *wall* is a finer sound than *yawl*; *woo*, than *you*; and the diphthongs accordingly in our tongue formed by *w*, abound much more than those formed by *y*; as may be seen by comparing the number of words in the dictionary, commencing with *w*, with those beginning with *y*. It is to be observed, that *â*, *ê*, and *ô*, are the only sounds that precede vowels in the formation of diphthongs in our tongue, and of these *â* only can retain its long sound, the other two having always their short sounds, when they precede a vowel, and their long one only after a vowel. As to the quantity of diphthongs, though in general they are long, yet they are not necessarily so, as all of them are capable of being reduced to the time of a short vowel, by a rapid utterance, and sometimes are, as shall be shewn hereafter.

In comparing our tongue with others in regard to the number of diphthongs, it will be found upon examination, that the French have only eight; for though there may be two more found in their tongue, yet it is in so few words, that they should be struck off the list, for the same reason that I have discarded three from ours. The Romans had ten, and the Greeks six.

From this view, it would appear at first, that the Greeks in this respect, were inferior both to the Romans and French. But there is something else to be taken into comparison beside the mere number, which is, the use made of them. The mere number of sounds will not make a language rich, unless their sounds be proportionably mixed and blended through it; the miser may esteem himself rich, but his wealth should be estimated by what he expends; and there is also another point of comparison, which is, not only the abundant, but the proper use of them. And in languages, as in fortunes, it will be found, that a moderate estate with economy, will produce more real plenty to the owners, than a very large one without it. In this light, it would appear, that the Greek abounds infinitely more in diphthongs, than either the Roman or French. They had the address too, to place them in the most conspicuous light, by putting them at the beginning and end of syllables and words. Whereas, both in Latin and French, they are generally placed in the middle of words, and obscured by some preceding or subsequent consonant taken into their sound. Whoever will examine the Greek Lexicon, will perceive what a number of words are to be found under the heads *Ai*, *Oi*, and *Eu*; but none in the Latin Dictionary,

tionary, except a few words adopted into their language from the Greek.

The English have luckily the same plenty, the same use, and a much greater variety of diphthongs; upon summing up, the account stands thus :

The Greeks	6.
The French	8.
The Romans	10.
The English	26.

I shall close this head of double sounds, or diphthongs, with a few collateral observations, previous to the discussion of another point, equally mistaken, the hiatus; a term given by grammarians to the meeting together of two vowels, which in some cases, not all, occasions a difficulty, stop or sort of gap in utterance, at the same time reprobated and exemplified by Pope, in the last line of the following couplet in his Essay on Criticism,

Some equal syllables alone require,
Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire.

Doctor Wallis's Grammar, which is admirably drawn up with respect to our written language, is full of errors in the few passages which relate to sound. He seems on this occasion to have been led into a mistake, by misapplying a maxim, which he had justly laid down with regard to the number and manner of forming the vowels; for it is certain, that in sounding those, the organs must be all properly placed, before any sound is emitted, nor do they ever change that position during the continuance of the sound, so that there is no action of the tongue perceptible in forming the vowel, as there is in the greatest number of the consonants. Now perceiving an action of the tongue in forming all sounds where y precedes a vowel, and unites with it, he too hastily concluded, that upon this principle, y must be a consonant. But he did not consider that the tongue is necessarily in different positions, when it forms the different simple vowels; and consequently that there must be a perceptible action of the tongue, when it changes from one position to another, in order to pronounce another vowel; thus, in sounding *ê*, for instance, the tongue lies close to the teeth, and is in the usual posture which it has when the mouth is shut. But when we attempt to pronounce

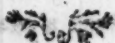
pronounce *ā*, the under jaw descends, and the tongue retires towards the throat; this will be immediately perceived by every one who will sound the two vowels *ē*, *ā*. In the first, the tongue touches the teeth; it separates itself from them in the second, and consequently the diphthong cannot be formed without a perceptible action of the tongue, as *yā*: this was the reason assigned by Wallis, and he has been implicitly followed by all our grammarians, in making *w* and *y* consonants. Mr. Johnson, amongst the rest, agrees with him in this, but assigned a different reason for it; as a proof of their being consonants, he says, they follow a vowel without any hiatus; and he instances in the words *frosty-winter*, *rosy-youth*. By which he seems to take it for granted, that no vowel can follow another without an hiatus; no poet must in future

Soothe with Amelia's liquid name the Nine,

for fear of breaking the legs of his reputation over this stumbling block of the critics; for the *i* and *a* succeeding in *Amelia*, must according to them be denounced an hiatus. The charming name of *Eloisa* too, where the *i* follows the *o*, must have an hiatus in it; her beautiful lines

Yet then to those dread altars as I drew,
Not on the cross my eyes were fixed, but you;
Not grace or zeal, love only was my call,
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.

must have two instances of the same kind, in the words *my eyes*, *my all*. How must the noble language of Greece have abounded in the hiatus, if it was constituted by one vowel succeeding another? in that case, we must be taught not to admire those fine sounds *Ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι—Οἰωνοὶ τε πάσι—Πολυφλοῖσ' ὅσοιο θαλάσσης*. Amazing that he should not know, that it is only in some of the vowels succeeding each other, that the hiatus is perceived, and that chiefly in those of the first class; those of the second and third, as well as diphthongs in general, may be followed by any vowel without any such effect.—O, all ye powers!—but rules and criticism with respect to sound, are not to be sought from mere men of letters: that is not their province.



EXTRACTS AND ORIGINAL PIECES,
FOR THE
INFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT
OF
STUDENTS
IN THE
ART OF READING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING.

A COMPARATIVE VIEW *
OF THE STATE OF LANGUAGE RESPECTING ANCIENT AND
MODERN INSTITUTION.

FROM a review of all the nations of antiquity, we shall find that the human language was but little advanced towards perfection, excepting amongst the Greeks and Romans. The different forms of the different languages of the world, necessarily arose from the different forms into which the human mind was moulded in the several countries, of which language was the copy. And the mind took its form from the different degrees of ascendancy, which the three great powers by which it is governed, obtained: I mean Reason, Fancy, Passion. In Greece, where the rational faculties held their due rank, in governing the rest, and regulating the fancy and the passions; the human mind had its due shape, proportion, and complexion; and correspondent to that was the size, symmetry, and beauty of their language, which was its transcript. Conviction, and persuasion, being amongst them essential to government, the language by which these ends were to be obtained, must have had its foundation in reason and nature. In countries, where passion had the ascendancy, the mind, reduced to an almost brutal state, expressed itself chiefly in the language of brutes. In those states where the useful arts only were introduced, or the attention of the people was wholly engaged by
T commerce,

* This is printed verbatim from a manuscript of Mr. Sheridan's given to the Author of the preceding pages for the purpose.

commerce, the language was chiefly formed to answer those ends. And in those larger empires, where government was carried on by working on the imagination, fancy bore the chief sway, and their language of course was fantastical.

To some of the above descriptions may all the languages of antiquity be referred, as well as those of the greatest part of nations, now inhabiting three quarters of the globe. But with regard to most of the languages at this time spoken in Europe, a new accidental cause produced remarkable effects, and turned things in a great measure out of the usual and natural course.

When the Goths and Vandals had put an end to the language, as well as the empire of the Romans, the barbarous manners and speech of those rude nations, supplanted the more polished Roman, in all places where they made settlements, and the greatest part of Europe was reduced almost to the lowest state of barbarism; in which it remained during many ages. At length in the fifteenth century, the languages and arts of old Greece and Rome, had as it were a resurrection from the tombs in which they had so long been buried. This could not fail of effecting a remarkable change in the manners of those nations, where these languages and arts were introduced. From barbarous and brutal, they gradually became more polished and humane; and a long night of ignorance, was succeeded by a dawn of knowledge, which promised a glorious day. They were no longer circumscribed, by the narrow compass of ideas, with which their own language and customs might furnish them, like former countries in the same circumstances with themselves; no, they had an immense hoard of knowledge, the painful collection of ages, amongst the wisest and most civilized nations that had ever inhabited this globe, at once presented to view, and offered to their use. And happy had it been for these times if our ancestors had known how to make a proper use of this treasure, so as to enrich themselves to the degree that they might have done, and to have handed down the noble inheritance to posterity. But instead of applying the funds of moral and political knowledge, found in the works of ancient authors, to the amendment of their several political states; instead of endeavouring to improve their own languages, by the noble models that were presented to them in those of Greece and Rome; men of the brightest parts, applied themselves every where to the acquirement of a critical skill in those languages, without any other end in view; and those of more solid understanding, were wholly

wholly ingrossed by the study of the worst part of ancient literature handed down to us, that of the Greek philosophy; which being in general founded in error, as it occasioned endless controversies amongst the Ancients themselves, could not fail of producing the same effects amongst the Moderns. Thus a general spirit of pedantry in polite literature, from which the present times are far from being free, prevailed in Europe; and false systems of philosophy, which have been but lately overthrown, were every where established. How far this spirit of pedantry, and the general application of men of the greatest abilities, might have affected the political interests of the several states of Europe, is beyond my present purpose to enquire. I shall only observe by the way, that previous to the revival of letters, most of the governments established by our Gothic ancestors, were either free, or the people engaged in struggles for their freedom. But in all those countries where this ardour for ancient literature prevailed, they lost their liberty. And this was an effect naturally to be expected; for when men of the greatest abilities in a state, who alone are capable of opposing or frustrating the designs of ambitious usurpation, withdraw from the active, to the contemplative life, they leave the field open for tyranny to enter, and range in at large.

But it is immediately to my point to enquire what effect this had upon language, and more particularly upon that of our own country. There are two kinds of language, by which the understanding may be enlightened, and the mind of man formed; the spoken, and the written: the one conveyed to the mind through the ear, by the voice uttering articulate sounds or words; the other presented to the eye, by means of visible marks. And it is generally thought that the one is equally well calculated to answer the end as the other. But as I have in a former discourse demonstrated that this opinion is erroneous, and that some of the noblest purposes of social communication, can not possibly be attained, by any language but that which proceeds from the living voice, it is a matter of great moment to consider, what the consequence must be, of giving the preference to written language in any country; more especially in ours, who have not only given the preference to it, but employed all our pains about that, neglecting utterly that which is spoken. A
circumstance

circumstance in which we differ from the practice of all civilized nations, ancient and modern.

In order to this let us compare the conduct of the Greeks in this respect, with our own, article by article, and see what good and bad effects naturally and necessarily followed from the different methods.

THE GREEKS

EMPLOYED their chief care and attention about their *living tongue*.

They examined the power of sounds in the simple elements or letters with the utmost nicety ; whether they were long or short, smooth or harsh, strong or weak.

They learned to pronounce syllables and words with the greatest exactness of proportion both in time and sound, or quantity and quality.

They were taught to deliver their sentiments, or repeat the productions of others, in all the variety of tones, that nature or art had supplied, as expressions of the several passions, emotions of the mind, or exertions of the fancy ; and these were accompanied with suitable looks and gesture. All three in unison to each other, and forming perfect harmony, by observing the nicest relative proportions in each.

Their public speakers could gain attention upon whatever topic

THE ENGLISH

ABOUT their written language.

We learn to know the letters that represent those sounds in writing, without enquiring at all into the power or nature of those sounds, so represented.

We to pronounce syllables and words without regard either to the one or the other ; and it is only necessary that the learners should shew by their pronunciation, that they know what syllables and words the letters stand for.

We are taught to deliver our own exercises, or the works of others, with little or no variation of voice, or else with some disagreeable discordant cant, applied to all sentences alike ; without any accompaniments of looks or gesture, or else with such as are improper, ungraceful, or disgusting.

The most numerous body of our public speakers, who have their

topic they spoke, from the mere delight that people took in listening to them: But upon any subject that concerned the temporal interests of their auditors, they could work upon their passions in such a way, as to deter them from what appeared wrong, and incite them to the pursuit of what was right.

Amongst them, attention to exactness in uttering sound, produced an equal attention to exactness in marking those sounds in writing; which was done by them in the most precise, clear, and uniform manner; so that to pronounce the words properly at sight, required little more than a thorough knowledge of the letters which composed them; and to spell them properly in writing, little more was necessary than to be able to form the letters, both in natives and foreigners who learned their tongue.

Their words were always spelt, as they were pronounced.

Their writers, being perfect masters of composition, which they were regularly taught, always suited their numbers to their subject; and arranged their words in such a way in metre, as might give the most forcible expression to their sentiments, and afford the greatest variety of numbers, so as to please

their choice of all manner of topics, in which not only the temporal, but the eternal interests of mankind, are most nearly concerned, are so far from working upon men to pursue their true interests, that they have it not in their power even to gain their attention.

Amongst us through the want of considering the nature and power of sounds, our written alphabet is so defective and our manner of spelling words, so irregular, that a just pronunciation, and proper manner of spelling words are acquired only by a few of the natives, and are almost impracticable to foreigners.

Ours seldom.

Ours, ignorant of all principles of composition, which they are never taught, write wholly from ear, and in much the same kind of numbers, whatever be the subject. Instead of variety and expression, melody and smoothness are chiefly attended to both in their periods and verses, by those who are most

please without cloying the ear, when repeated.

They had music masters whose chief office it was to teach people a well measured and harmonious delivery; by which all so instructed acquired an article of the utmost importance in public life, and a most pleasing ornament in private intercourse.

They had dancing masters whose chief office it was to regulate all the motions of the human frame, and all the attitudes of the body, in such a way as that whether walking or standing still; speaking or listening; running or wrestling; in the rostrum or in the palæstra; the human figure should always appear graceful.

The Greek artists had the highest advantage in having these living models thus perfectly prepared to their hands. Their painters and statuaries had nothing to do but to copy from innumerable subjects in life the most perfect figures of grace and expression, belonging to all the nobler and more elevated emotions of the mind, to be daily seen in their orators.

Their artists by attending to the effects produced by the orators upon different parts of the auditory, according to their different

most in vogue. This produces an uniformity, which in any long work becomes insupportable to the ear, and of course wears attention.

We have music masters to teach the few who have good voices and talents in that way to sing, which can be of no benefit but to those who are to get their livelihood by it, and is seldom attained by others in such a degree as even to be an ornament.

We have dancing masters whose principal employment it is to teach one poor unmanly French dance, in which so few arrive at any degree of excellence, that it is offensive to such as have any just ideas of grace, to look at them when they are performing it.

Our artists, if they draw after life, can exhibit only such figures as are to be seen in life. They must be contented with drawing unmeaning or awkward portraits. Grace and expression belonging to the nobler emotions are to be found only in the remains of antiquity; those that are low and mean have been admirably done from life by the inimitable Hogarth. A sad satire on the times!

Our artists, if they look for any such amongst the auditory, either in the senate-house or at the bar, may see abundance either

ferent tempers and dispositions, could see all the different degrees of expression belonging to any emotion, from its slightest, to its most forcible expression, and apply it to use in their several history pieces.

Their musical composers had the same advantage in borrowing from the public speakers all the finest tones belonging to the emotions and passions, which transplanted into their vocal music, and adorned by the superior charms of the singing voice, sunk deep into the heart, and produced the most powerful effects upon the mind.

The Greeks studied no language but their own; in consequence of which they became perfect masters of its grammar, its prosody, and the meaning of its words; in short of every part of their language, relative either to sound or sense.

If with the like view we turn to the history of the Romans, we shall find them in the early ages, a rude, sagacious, unlettered race; but by a judicious adoption of the admirable institutions of the Greeks, aided by the luminous precepts and bright example of that polished people, we see them suddenly emerging from a state of barbarism, and at comparatively a short interval, attaining to such a height of civilization, that they almost rivalled their great masters in beauty of language and powers of elocution. But this rapid progress was not made, by sitting down in their studies, and passing their time in a blind and useless admiration of the Greek writings, and the works of their artists; no, it was by doing as the Greeks did, by taking pains to enrich and polish their own language, by borrowing freely from the Grecian stores, and reducing every thing to rule and order. By instructing their children, in all the

either of absent, or merely attentive faces; or if they are desirous of drawing a sleeping piece, they may be furnished with good patterns, from the first drowsy nod, to the profound snore, by visiting our churches.

Our musical composers, having no archetypes of this sort, from which they may borrow the true tones, of the finer emotions and passions; or not knowing how to adapt these to words, strive only to please the fancy by novelty, variety, difficulty of execution, or noisy chorusses, and their compositions are chiefly calculated to gratify the ear.

We employ the best part of our time in the study of other languages, to the utter neglect of our own. In consequence of which we scarcely know any thing of the grammar or prosody of our tongue; and the meaning of our words is very vague and indeterminate.

peculiar

peculiar properties, and niceties of their mother tongue, and in all the arts of adorning their speech by the graces of delivery. By a generous emulation in contending for the palm, with their most famous historians, poets, orators, and artists; not by a servile imitation of their works, but by making themselves masters of the principles and rules belonging to the several sciences and arts; by laying in a fund of their own, and drawing out of their own stores.

This comparison might be extended to a much greater length in many other articles, but enough has been said to serve as a clue to the curious reader, if he is inclined to follow the subject farther. And upon such an enquiry, how far soever carried, he will find that the Ancients had no advantage over us in any respect, but what arose from cultivating the language of nature, delivered by the living voice; instead of the language of art, offered to the eye in the dead letter.

The genius, capacity, and manners of a nation, can be estimated by nothing so well as the state of their language. We all allow that the understanding of a people must be limited by the number of ideas; and the number of ideas by the number of words which are in use. Where a language contains but a few words, the ideas of a people must be as few; or at least the power of communicating those ideas must be limited to the number of their symbols.

Upon the same principle, the powers of fancy, and emotions of the mind, must be circumscribed by the number of tones, looks, and gestures, in general use; as furnished by nature, or agreed upon by compact, to be their representatives. As in the one case, where there are but few words in use, there will be but few ideas; so in the other, where tones, looks and gestures are few, there will be as few feelings.

And as the want of regularity and precision in the use of words, must occasion disorder in the exercise of the intellectual faculties; so must the same causes produce similar effects, in the exertions of fancy, and emotions of the heart.

If this be the case, as it indisputably is, there can be no object of such importance to any nation as the improvement, and regulation of their language, since it is in vain without that to expect the improvement and regulation of the minds of the natives; as language is the great instrument, by which the human mind is shaped, and fitted for all the purposes in life.

ON

ON THE
CULTURE OF LANGUAGE
AND
ELOCUTION.

DISCOURSE I.

WHILE the utmost efforts of art and industry are exerted, in improving every thing for the use of man, the most important article of all is neglected; which is, the improvement of man himself. For, if men are not prepared by proper culture, to estimate justly the real value of things, they will be apt to prize those things most, which least deserve it; if they are not qualified to pursue what is consonant to the nobler part of their nature, they will certainly be attracted by such objects, as solicit the appetites and passions belonging to the baser parts. If they are not rendered capable of relishing intellectual enjoyments, they will of course be absorbed in those of the sensual kind.

The great boundary between the human and brute species, seems to have been overlooked, or slightly touched upon by philosophers; for, while some placed it in rationality; some, in risibility; and others, in the erect posture of man, and his walking upon two legs; the great and obvious distinction seems to have been forgotten; which is, that all the nobler faculties of man, require pains and culture to produce and carry them to perfection; while those of animals, grow to it of course, without any assistance, in the same manner as in trees and plants.

The true object of philosophy should therefore be, to consider, first, in what the perfection of man's nature consists; and then to seek out for such a mode of education, as is most likely to produce that perfection.

Man is a compound being; he is the link between spiritual, and animal existence, and partakes of both their natures; but he has also something peculiar to himself. His intellectual faculties, prove his alliance to a superior class of beings; his sensual appe-

tites and passions, shew his affinity to brutes; but it is in the powers of the imagination, that we are to seek for his own peculiar, or human nature, as distinguishing him from the brute species, on the one hand; and the purely spiritual, on the other. . .

As reason, presides over the intellectual; passion, over the sensitive; so fancy, governs this part of the human frame. And of all the faculties belonging to man, this seems to be the most constant in its operations, and the most extensive in its influence. The power of fancy over ideas of sensation and reflection, is unbounded. She creates beings of her own; and so great is her influence, that beings of her creation, often make deeper impressions on the minds of men, than such as have a real existence. She excites, modifies, and directs the passions of man, at her will. Not only his sports and pleasures, but even his more serious pursuits in life, are too frequently under her direction. The history of every nation in the world, will furnish out innumerable instances, of her unbounded influence, over the most important concerns of man, in religion, government, laws, morals, philosophy, and the arts. And her present despotic power, which she exercises over most articles in life, cannot better be described or explained, than by the single term, Fashion. Nor shall we wonder at the mighty influence of fancy, when we consider, that this faculty never ceases to act. When the intellect is weary of its labours, and demands rest; when the sensual appetites and passions are sated, and dormant; fancy still continues for ever on the wing, for ever unwearyed in her pursuits. Nay in sleep itself, when every other faculty is locked up, she asserts her empire over the human mind, and frolics there at large in all the wild luxuriance of dreams. . .

From this view of her power, we may see, that though she may be an excellent ally to reason, yet if she does not acknowledge his superiority, and is not content with a state of subordination to his orders, she may either strengthen the animal part of man's nature, or set up an independent power of her own, superior to both. Let us consider her in these three lights. As an ally to reason, she partakes of the divine nature of the soul, and has the whole store of intellectual ideas at command. She takes her flight with a bold wing through infinity, uncircumscribed by space or time; Reason, her chief and guide, all the while aiding and directing her course. In this employment, she adds pleasure to the operations of the intellect, and adorns science so as always

to make it delightful. Thus she produces a fund of pleasure far superiour to those of the sensual kind, and of course obtains an ascendant over the animal faculties, and draws them after her into a due subordination to the intellectual. Such were the effects produced by the cultivation of the nobler arts, in ancient Greece and Rome. . .

As an ally to the passions, I mean of the sensual kind, she is confined with them to crawl the earth. In this abject state, she soon becomes a slave to the passions, and her exertions in this employment, serve only to degrade men below beasts. This depraved condition of man, has been largely set forth, in the history of the Epicurean sect, in that of the Sybarites, the Capuans, and modern Italy; it is to be feared too that examples of this sort, are not wanting in our own country. . .

When she sets up for herself, and acknowledges no superior, her vigorous and wild sallies through unknown regions, without guide or director, are either vain and fruitless, as has been seen in the vast variety of systems in speculative philosophy, which have been produced in different ages and countries of the world, by the wild imaginations of men; or else they have been productive of the worst disorders in human affairs, when exerted about the practical duties of life, in religion, politics, and morals. Her efforts here serve only to pervert man from the great end of his being; to rob him of all his animal, as well as rational enjoyments, in order to substitute her own visionary ones in their room; and often to change his nature, and incline him to that, which we are told belongs to spirits reprobate. Such, we know, have been the effects at all times, of extravagant enthusiasm and wild superstition. . .

When we look into the history of the world, we shall find that fancy has been but seldom employed in her most glorious sphere, that of assisting human nature in its progress towards perfection; on the contrary, her chief office has been, to debase, or pervert mankind. The reason of which is, that this part of the human frame, has, in most nations of the world, been wholly neglected, and left to chance. There has been care taken in many, even to excess, to improve the intellectual powers; by which, numbers have spent their lives fruitlessly in abstract speculations, and useless, often impenetrable metaphysics. Law-givers and magistrates have endeavoured to restrain the passions most dangerous

to

to society, within proper bounds, by penal laws. Moralists and philosophers have tried to prevail on men to do their duty, by shewing them what it is; while the imagination left to itself, unguided and unrestrained, laughs at their vain attempts, and shews itself paramount to all the dictates of reason, to all laws, divine and human. . .

It is evident that the perfection of man's nature, can be attained only by a proper cultivation of the several faculties, belonging to the several parts of his complicated frame, in a due degree of subordination. That the intellectual, or rational part, should hold the first rank in improving and directing the imagination; and that both should unite, in restraining and guiding the animal part. This can be done only by a right education: and there never has been yet in any age or country, a national mode of education established with that view. . .

To cultivate the nobler powers of the human mind, so as to carry them to perfection, is against the very spirit of despotic government; and in republics, the Aristocratic form approaches too near tyranny, and the Democratic, too near anarchy; or the struggles between the two, occasion too much fluctuation, to admit of any solid establishment of that sort. It is only in the well poized government of Britain, that such a balance might also be kept up in the little state of man. And upon a comparison of the state of the human mind, with that of the British constitution, we shall find that the one, bears a strong resemblance to the other. Reason may be considered as vested with the king's power; the passions, as the Commons, that furnish the supplies to action; and the powers of imagination, as the Lords, who stand as a barrier between the two other states, to prevent tyranny, from the too great exertion of authority in the one; and anarchy, from the unruly turbulence in the other. . .

Now if the minds of the inhabitants of this country, were formed, by a suitable education, correspondent to the nature of the constitution, which ought to be the case in all wise states, it would produce subjects, worthy of so noble a form of government, and capable of supporting it against any efforts which might be made to overthrow it. Nor would there be found so much difficulty in accomplishing this point, as may at first view be imagined. It would be brought about by a change in a single article, wherein we have proceeded very erroneously ever since the
revival

revival of letters; and which change, would be allowed, upon the slightest examination, to be much for the better, and likely to produce the happiest effects. . .

To shew this in as short and clear a light as possible, let it be remembered, that the instrument used to cultivate all the nobler faculties of man, is language. Now there are two sorts of language in use; the one, spoken; the other, written. The one, manifested by the living voice; the other, by the dead letter. The one, Divine, given by God himself; the other human, the invention of man. Have we neglected then the instrument provided for us by the Allwise Artificer, who best knew what was fitted to carry his own work to perfection; have we changed it for one, the invention of short sighted man, and bestowed all our pains upon the culture of the latter, wholly neglecting the former; and shall we hope to do it with impunity? No, there is not any deviation from Nature, which is not attended with proportional ill effects; but most of all, in this most important article, upon which, the right cultivation of all our nobler faculties, depends. . .

Thought and feeling, make up the whole of man's perceptions. These are communicated by two species of language, utterly different, and independent of each other. Words, make up the language of thought, or ideas; the language of feeling, or inward emotion, is composed of tones, looks, and gesture. It is true they may be united, and when cultivated together, and brought to perfection, they may carry the whole of man's nature to perfection also. But when the language of ideas, or thought, comes to be separated from the language of feeling, or emotion; when words alone are attended to, without any regard to their concomitant tones, looks, and gesture; it is only the intellectual part that can be improved by it, and that too, not nearly in an equal degree, as when they are united; whilst the more refined powers of the imagination, and the delicate sensibilities of the heart, remain dormant, and wild fancy and the passions are left to riot at large. Mere words, or the language of ideas alone, though delivered with all the clearness of the best understanding, never yet had any power over the passions, nor could excite any feeling; whilst tones, looks, and gesture, even in an irregular state, have a very powerful influence over the human mind. Of this we have daily instances in the little effects produced

produced by pulpit-elocution, from very rational discourses, delivered coldly from notes; and on the other hand, in the extraordinary impressions made, by the wild uncultivated oratory of the Meth'odist preachers. And our theat'rical representations shew cle'arly, how necessary the language of tones, looks, and gesture, is, to display the workings of the imagination, and all the internal emotions of the mind; for, were the actors to deliver their parts, with the same unanimated, motionless declamation, which is generally used in other places, who could endure to sit out a play?

What have we then to do, but to desert the wrong' course in which we set out, and go back to that, which Na'ture herself has pointed out to us. To bestow our chief pains, upon the cultivation of the living tongue, and to consider the writ'ten language, as it ought to be, in a subor'dinate light.

To keep a due balance in the constitution of the human mind, between the unfeeling despotism of the in'tellect, on the one hand; and the blind impetuosity of the passions, on the other; it is necessary that the powers of the imagination should be cultivated to the ut'most, and reg'ulated by the ni'cest art. This can be done by no other medium, but that of lan'guage; and the language employed in this work, must be that of emo'tions, not merely that of ide'as; it must be the language of the imagination and the heart, united to that of the intellect. It is the imagination, as was before observed, which chiefly distinguishes man from all other animated beings; and on that account, bears the greatest sway over mankind. It is therefore of the ut'most importance, that it should be under the guidance of the nobler part of man's nature, not made subservient to the baser. Since therefore the alliance of fancy with reason, in a due state of subordination, is of such moment to the welfare of mankind, and is so necessary to the advancement of human nature towards its state of perfection, let us inquire how such a union may best be accomplished. Nat'urally, none such subsists; it must therefore be a work of art; and if there be an art, to whose perfection it should be necessary that the intellectual powers, in their most improved state, should hold the first' rank; and those of the imagination, also cultivated to the highest, should hold the second, and be subservient to the other, in order to controul and regulate the passions, we need seek no farther for the perfection of human nature, than in the perfection of that art.

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It is manifest that such an art, must be the most comprehensive of all others; it must take in the whole compass of man's faculties; whether of the intellect, the imagination, or the senses. And as the operation of these can be manifested only by the means of natural, or artificial signs; by words, tones, looks, and gesture; it must be an art that instructs mankind in the full import, proper use, and command, of all those signs. In short, the art necessary to carry human nature to perfection, and to display all its faculties in their full force and lustre, can be no other than the art of oratory.

I know how strangely such an assertion must sound, in an age, wherein this art is unstudied, unpractised, nay almost unknown. I know with what force of arms all the powers of prejudice will rise against such a paradox. I know how much the vanity of human nature, which has taught us to consider ourselves as the most illustrious of nations; and the pride of philosophy, which has set up an independent throne amongst us, and claims the sole right of empire over the mind, must be alarmed at a doctrine which strikes at once at the very foundation of their authority. But from prejudice, vanity, and pride, let us appeal to the throne of reason, and see whether this opinion be not founded in the nature of things, and whether it has not also been confirmed by experience. To prove that the art of oratory is such a one as I have described, we need only consider wherein the pre-eminence of human nature, over the rest of the animal creation, consists. Let us follow the usual distinction made on this occasion, that of reason and speech; without reference to the imagination, which yet I have shewn to be more peculiarly the characteristic of our nature. Under the term reason, I here include all the intellectual faculties; under the term speech, all the artificial and natural signs, whether words, tones, looks, or gesture, by which the exertions of those faculties, are manifested and communicated. The latter part, clearly and unquestionably belongs to oratory, and is its peculiar province. The former also, so far as the internal exertions, and progress of the intellectual faculties, depend upon the use of those signs, so far must that too rely upon the assistance of that art. And when it is considered that without the use of those signs, the mind could scarce make any progress in knowledge; and without a right use of them, must continually fall into error; it will be found that the improvement of the intellect itself, must in a great measure depend

depend upon it. But with regard to the more refined powers of the fancy, and the more delicate affections of the heart, it is impossible without the aid of this art, that they should be manifested so as to produce any great effect.

Having thus shewn the necessity of this art to the cultivation of man's nobler faculties, let us now see, whether by the accomplishment of it, they are not brought forward also in their due state of subordination. Who does not see that the intellectual powers must hold the first rank, and regulate all the rest, in the exercise of that art? Who does not see that fancy acquires her greatest force and ornament, when under the direction of the intellect? And who does not see that the union of these two must of course give them an empire over the passions, to govern them at will? The perfection of this art therefore, necessarily includes the perfection of all man's nobler faculties, and is, on that account, of all others, the art most worthy of man's attention.

Now let us see how far this hypothesis has been supported by experience. For, if what I have advanced upon this subject be well founded, it will follow that the people of those countries, where the greatest pains were taken to cultivate and refine their speech, and where the study and practice of oratory, were most general; approached the nearest to the perfection of human nature. But does history warrant the truth of this? Let us try. What nations were they who applied themselves to those studies, and the practice of that art? We know but of two, from the creation of the world to this hour; the Greeks and Romans. Do not their very names flash conviction on us? Need there more be said to prove the point? Are not these the very nations allowed by the universal voice of all mankind, to have excelled all others, and to have carried human nature to a degree of perfection, which none before them ever reached, none since have arrived at, even with the assistance of their admirable precepts, and bright examples; together with many glorious lights and advantages which they wanted? Were not these the only nations that ever were masters of the oratorical art? Will not this satisfy us. Do we want farther proof that it was to that art they were indebted for their pre-eminence over the rest of the world? Let us examine at what period of time it was the Greeks shone forth in all that blaze of glory; we shall find it was, when oratory had reached its meridian. Among what particular people of Greece, did the grand constellation of human

human excellencies arise, whose number and lustre have not been equalled since sun and moon were made? Among the Athenians, where oratory reached its highest pitch. When did the æra of the Ro'man glory commence? Not till after the art of oratory had arrived at its summit. In both nations when did this splendour vanish? When the sun of oratory was set.

Is there any doubt yet remaining? Will not the reason and nature of things, corroborated by the strongest facts, overthrow prejudice? Shall we not believe in the amazing powers of eloquence, the accounts of which are so strongly authenticated, unless she should present herself to our senses, in all the charms wherewith she was on'ce adorned, and through them, force conviction on our minds? It is to be feared a proof of this kind is not to be expected by us, in our present state. Much time, much pains did it cost the ancients, before they brought that art to perfection; much time, much labour must it cost the moderns, before they can attempt to rival them in that point. Yet surely, from circumstances, and the nature of things, we may form a just idea of the charms and powers of oratory, without having them exemplified to us, in a living instance.

Imagine to yourselves a Demosthenes, addressing the most illustrious assembly in the world, upon a point, whereon the fate of the most illustrious of nations, depended. How awful, such a meeting! How vast, the subject. Is man, possessed of talents adequate to the great occasion? Adequate—Yes, superior. By the power of his eloquence, the augustness of the assembly, is lost, in the dignity of the orator; and the importance of the subject, for a while suspended, by the admiration of his talents. With what strength of argument, with what powers of the fancy; with what emotions of the heart, does he assault and subjugate the whole man, and at once captivate his reason, his imagination, and his passions. To effect this, must be the utmost effort, of the most improved state of human nature. Not a faculty that he possesses, is here unemployed; not a faculty that he possesses, but is here exerted, to its highest pitch. All his internal powers are at work; all his external, testify their energies. Within, the memory, the fancy, the judgment, the passions, are all busy; without, every muscle, every nerve is exerted; not a feature, not a limb, but speaks. The organs of the body, attuned to the exertions of the mind, through the kindred organs of the hearers, instantaneously,

ta'neously, and as it were with an electrical spirit, vibrate those energies from soul to soul. Notwithstanding the diversity of minds in such a multitude, by the lightning of eloquence, they are melted into one mass; the whole assembly actuated in one and the same way, become as it were but one man, and have but one voice. The universal cry is, Let us march against Philip, let us fight for our liberties, let us conquer, or die.

Here only it is, that the admirable mechanism of the human frame, so far as it regards a union with an intellectual mind, and so far as it is fitted to display all the hidden powers of that mind to view, can be manifested. In these exertions, the divine part of us, becomes as it were an object of the senses; it is to be seen, to be heard; it lightned, in the eye of a Pericles; it thundered, from his voice. If any one doubt of the truth of what I have here advanced, let him reflect, whether there is any other situation in life, any other art or profession, in which it is possible for man, at once to display, all the force, of all his faculties, both of body, and mind. If there be not, the point must be granted. Compare Xerxes, on his throne; Philip, in the battle of Chæronæa; Archimedes, in his closet; or Virgil, in his study; with Demosthenes, rousing the Greeks to the preservation of their liberties—How do the King, the general, the philosopher, and the poet, sink below the orator.

What a magnificent idea, and yet how strictly just, has the enthusiastic spirit of Milton presented to us, of the power of the orators of old, in the few following admirable lines; where speaking of those of Athens, he says—

Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democracy;
Shook th' arsenal, and thunder'd over Greece
To Ma'cedon, and Artaxerxes' throne!

O thou genius of eloquence! that didst once irradiate those thy two favourite nations, and beam around them a lustre more than human; whither art thou fled? Thou who didst love to dwell with liberty, why hast thou refused to visit this land of freedom? But thy indignation is justly kindled against us; we have paid thee no homage; whilst all our vows are addressed to a usurper, who was once thy servile minister. It has therefore sared with us, as with the Israelites, when they worshipped an idol of their own handiwork,

handiwork, and the living God, withdrew his presence from them. Britons be wise; appease the angry Genius; court him to be propitious to your vows. Dedicate but one temple to him, he will enter it; he will kindle the sacred fire, never more to be extinguished, and spread a new glory round the land. Under his benign influence, the arts will revive, as of old; religion and morals, flourish; liberty, be secured; and Britain shall reign a Queen among the nations, till time shall be no more.

DISCOURSE II.

THE motives to induce gentlemen to promote a plan for cultivating the living language, and the powers of elocution, have been already sufficiently urged in my former discourse. But there is another part of human species, and surely the most amiable, that are equally concerned in it, I mean the fair sex. I know not by what strange fatality it has happened, that in the important article of education, they have scarcely been considered. The lordly masters of the creation have chalked out a course of instruction for themselves, but the women are left to make the best use of their talents that they can, without aid or assistance. And yet, that they are born with minds capable of as high improvement as those of the other sex, has been amply proved in the instances of several ladies, who have distinguished themselves as eminently in their sphere, when they have had equal advantages of culture. Is it wise, is it politic in men to make no provision for the improvement of the minds of those, who are to be their nearest and dearest associates in life? With what justice can they afterwards complain, when they do not meet with the delights of a rational society with those, whose minds have never been stored with knowledge? Or how can they blame them for passing their time in trifling amusements, when they have not been prepared to fill it up in any other way? This neglect has been owing to causes which it would not be difficult to explain, were it necessary at present to enter upon the discussion; but I believe all the world are of opinion that it is time some remedy were applied; and I am much deceived if what I am about to propose, will not open a new path of education to the

the ladies, which will terminate in the completion of all that is to be wish'd for by them in that point.

To put this in a clear light; let us only consider, what the natural consequences would be, of introducing the true art of reading. Of all arts it would be found the most bewitching, when people should have made any progress in it upon sure grounds. In that case it would prove the most ple'asing exercise when alone, and make every one enter into the spir'it of an author with ten times the relish; and in com'pany, it would be considered as one of the foremost accomplishments, and which would most contribute to the entertain'ment of the hearers. How delightfully would the compositions of our poets sound from their sweet voices; and how irresistible must they themselves prove, if they approached nearer to the perfection of their nature, as described by Milton in his Eve, where he says—

such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from her lips, in prose, or numerous verse;
More tuneable, than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness.

More tuneable indeed than lute or harp would such elocution be, and furnish an accomplishment far more ple'asing, independent of its utility, than an'y of the splendid trifles, no'w in fashion. The fund of entertain'ment of this kind would be inexhaustible, from the infinite number of authors, and variety of their compositions, both in poetry and prose. But above a'll, what a delightful employment would it be to moth'ers, were they but qualified for the task, to instruct their little prattlers themselves, in the rudiments of a pure and correct speech, instead of leaving them to be corrupted by ignorant mercenaries. How must their hearts glow within them, upon finding the success' that would attend their labours; when they might hope they were forming future prop's to our declining church, and future bulwarks to our tottering state. With what cordial delight must the father of a family, behold the moth'er of his children, engaged in so u'seful and amiable a talk.

It is well known that the first examples of eloquence, exhibited at Rome, in any degree of perfection, were produced from the early pains taken with the Gracchi, by their mother Cornelia; a woman born with uncommon talents for elocution, and the first person known in that state, to have cultivated powers of this

this kind, as far as her own application could go, at a time when the art was utterly unknown, and the great artiele of speech was left wholly to the guidance of chance, as amongst us at this day. But if the art of speaking were now to be revived; and if the ladies had the advantage of regular instruction in it, have we not reason to believe that there might many British Cornelias arise, to form orators superior to the Gracchi; for this we know was the case at Rome, after that art had been introduced.

In this way, ladies! you would be in your proper sphere; you would be the help-mates you were designed to men. Nature made you of a softer clay, of a more delicate mould than ours. She has given you nicer sensibilities of heart, more exquisite perceptions of fancy. It is your peculiar province therefore, to mould the tender heart, and teach the young idea how to shoot. Let the part of man be, to guide the more vigorous understanding. Man, is formed for public, as well as for private life; woman, for private life only. Let the experienced father instruct the child in what is fit for his public sphere; let the skilful mother train him in what respects domestic life. The care of each, is equally necessary to form comple'te men; and the most accomplished men the world has ever seen, were formed in this way.

But now let us consider some consequences still more important, that would necessarily follow from this. Upon making some progress in the art of reading, it would be found impossible to arrive at perfection in it, without a complete knowledge of the language both in its grammatical, and rhetorical parts. It would be found impracticable to deliver intelligibly to others, what they did not thoroughly understand themselves; to give grace in utterance to elegance of expression, which they did not perceive; or due force to sentiments which they did not feel. A thorough knowledge therefore both of grammar and rhetoric, would become absolutely necessary to this end. But as these are dry and laborious studies, they are not likely to be voluntarily pursued, without something to sweeten the toil. This, I have shewn, would not be wanting to those, who should have made any progress in the art of reading. The lights which the two studies would mutually throw on each other, would make the task easy; and the delight proposed by accomplishing the end, would make them even fond of the means. Where
labour

labour is lov'd, it ceases to be labour. Let therefore that on'e point be establish'd, let there be a method of teaching young ladies to read well, upon principles of grammar and rhetoric, they will apply themselves to study the best writers with a'rdour, because with deli'ght. In the English language alo'ne, there will be found a sufficient number of authors, in ev'ry species of writing, to store their minds with a'll kinds of knowlege, which can be either useful, or ornament'al; and they will have been prepared before-hand, to displa'y that knowlege, whenever there is occasion for it, in the best, and clearest light. In this case, the ladies would have a manifest superiority over the men, in several important articles, whilst the present mode of education is continued. They would have no occasion to grudge the men their extraordinary labour in search of knowlege, through the round-about, steep, and perplexed paths of Lat'in and Gre'ek; when they might arrive at the same end, in half the time, through the easy and pleasant road of their moth'er tong'ue. They would have no cause to envy them their acquisitions in two dead languages, which they are never after to have an opportunity of displaying, either by speech, or writing; whilst they shall be mistresses of the living language, which alo'ne is employed on all occasions, whether of use, or ornament, either by the tong'ue, or the pen'. Let the men boast that they can write Lat'in correctly; let them smile, and be content with speaking and writing Eng'lish in its purity. Let tho'se, value themselves on their critical skill in the works of Homer, Sophocles, Virgil, and Horace, in the orig'inal; let these, be content with reading them in translations, nor think they lo'se much by the difference; but let them plume themselves on their superiority, if they should have a clearer perception, and a nicer relish of the beauties of Milton, Shakespeare, Pope, and Swift. Let men, pride themselves upon their knowlege in logic, metaphysics, mathematics, and other speculative sciences; let the elegant arts, and all that can contribute to the happiness of so'cial life, or the delight of so'cial converse, be the study and employment of the fair. These will be the natural consequences of making the art of reading, and the grammatical study of English, the two fundamental articles in female education. But the good will not stop he're; it will prove, in its consequences, equally beneficial to the men'. For should they, from the inveterate force of custom, persevere in their o'ld track, soon after these

studies

Studies shall have been pursued with success by the ladies, they must be adopted by the men also, and made part of their course. A young man of one and twenty, after having finished his studies, would be ashamed to be out-done by a girl of sixteen, in propriety and grace of elocution, and in a critical knowledge of our mother-tongue. This, will excite an emulation, which will tend to the improvement of both parties. A relish for the same art, and pursuit of the same studies, would necessarily produce in the two sexes, such a desire of communicating their thoughts, and displaying their talents to each other, as to introduce that golden state of social converse, which is never to be hoped for, but where the society is composed of both sexes. The men, would no longer be devoted to the bottle, or gaming; nor would the ladies find, such superlative delight, in a rout, or a drum. The superior pleasure arising from such a miabile intercourse, would put an end here, as it has done in France, to all separate societies of the sexes. This would be productive of such harmony and good will between them, as to establish that degree of equality, which is absolutely necessary to a close and intimate union. Both sexes being on a par, in the most material articles of knowledge, common to both, and in which a degree of excellence is equally necessary to both, would no longer have any invidious dispute about superiority. The women, equally distinguished in the domestic, with the men, in the public sphere of life, might claim equal merit. Nor would there be any difference, but what naturally results, from the superior talents, labour, and difficulty, attendant on the one employment, more than the other; about which, there could be no competition.

In short, it rests upon you ladies! to bring about this reformation; nor can you, in so doing, be thought to step out of your sphere; as the most perfect and critical knowledge of English, could never be charged on you as an affectation of learning, or female pedantry. And the men will readily allow, that the tongue is the weapon of the fair; nor can they blame them if they polish it to the utmost, and learn the most perfect use and management of it. When that is done, let the men take care of themselves; for should they continue to rely upon their old weapon, the pen, to the neglect of speech; and on their skill

in the dead languages, without cultivating their own; they would find themselves overmatched in all topics of conversation, and victory declare itself on the side of the ladies.

DISCOURSE III.

IN my two former discourses, I endeavoured to shew the great importance of cultivating the living language, towards the general improvement of human nature itself, in all its nobler faculties and powers; in this, I shall consider its use more particularly with regard to society, in the improvement of manners and conversation.

It is evident that a general application to book-language, with a total neglect of the living tongue, is not the way to improve the faculties of speech. Accordingly we find that in a country abounding with excellent writers, a good speaker is almost a prodigy. No observation is more common, than that bookish men are remarkable for taciturnity. Nor is this silence to be considered as a mark of wisdom, or the effect of deep thinking, as is generally supposed, for in fact such men find it difficult, through want of practice, to express their thoughts with ease, and therefore avoid speaking as painful. Yet many of them can write their sentiments readily, because they have been accustomed to writing. While on the other hand, a superficial man of the world, by being habituated to conversation, shall always be able to express his thoughts, however inaccurately, yet with volubility and freedom; though infinitely inferior to the studious man, both in knowledge of things and words; as would evidently appear should they both reduce their thoughts to writing. Thus the learned, often think, without speaking; and others, too often speak, without thinking. They who have the best materials for conversation, cannot make use of them for want of a free utterance; and they who have a readiness of speech, want the necessary materials, to make it answer any end, either of pleasure, or profit. Does not the neglect of this useful branch of education, tend to make men misers in knowledge? to brood in secret over their hoard of ideas, and to engage in selfish pursuits?

There was some years since given to the world an Estimate of the manners of the times, which were referred by the author to the

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the principle of effem'inity. But it might as justly be asserted, that the Thames owes its plenty of water, to some small rivulet that runs into it, as that the variety of corruptions, and depraved manners of the age, were owing to a principle, whose operations are confined to so narrow a sphere. It is surprising that the reverend author should not have recollected the true source, pointed out every where throughout the whole Christian dispensation, of the chief virtues belonging to man, I mean benevolence; styled in the scripture phrase, Charity; and consequently its opposite, selfishness, must be the source of our worst vices. And should a new estimate be made, it would be found that all the polluted manners of the times, which he has in vain endeavoured to derive, from his scanty rill, effem'inity; naturally flow from the plentiful fountain of selfishness. The virtues and vices, in all ages and countries, have had their different degrees of ascendancy, in proportion as the one, or the other of these principles had the predominance. And indeed as all the principal virtues and vices, depend upon the proper discharge of our social duties, or the contrary, they can be referred to no other source. Now nothing can contribute more to the propagation of selfishness in this country, than the ascendancy which the written language has obtained amongst us, over that which is spoken. In order to prove this, I must beg my hearers to recollect a proposition, sufficiently made out in a former discourse, that the mere language of ideas, whether written, or spoken, can, of itself, have no other power but that of conveying knowledge, and improving the understanding; to touch the heart, and agitate the fancy, it is requisite that the language of emotions should be joined with it, the language of tones, looks, and gesture.

In all public communications by the living voice, three different effects will be produced, according as the speaker neglects to unite these two languages; or as he unites them unskillfully and discordantly; or as he blends them in due proportion, so as to form harmony.

In the first case, no emotion can possibly be communicated by the speaker. He who has no feelings in himself, nor makes use of any signs of feelings, can never work upon the sensibility of others. He may communicate knowledge indeed, of a certain kind, and to a certain degree, provided his hearers will be at the pains of commanding their own attention, in spite of a dull monotony, whose very nature it is, to deaden and dissipate attention.

In the second case, where the speaker uses the language of emotions unskilfully and discordantly, he becomes either an object of ridicule or disgust, to his intelligent hearers; who ever after avoid him, or if they do attend, indulge themselves in a malignant satisfaction, by laughing at his absurdities.

In the last case, rarely, very rarely seen amongst us, where the speaker blends the two languages properly, the fancy, the passions, the understanding, are all pleasingly agitated; each individual receives an additional delight, from the sum communicated to the whole auditory; reflected from eye to eye, during a charmed attention to the orator; poured out from breast to breast, when his silence permits them to give way to the fulness of their hearts. Perhaps there is no other situation, in which the social disposition of mankind is so exquisitely gratified. They assemble at such meetings with satisfaction in their looks, from expectation of the delight which they are to receive; they part with mutual congratulations, on account of mutual benefit and entertainment. Such an intercourse, frequently repeated, tends to eradicate all selfish passions; and to invigorate all the finer emotions of benevolence, and the great duty of Christian charity. The justness of this picture, must be acknowledged by all, who at any time have heard good preachers deliver their discourses with force and feeling.

Of these three ways, it is evident, that the first, is calculated to render us unsocial; the second, dissocial; and the third alone can make us, what we were intended to be, social beings.

In the last of these, through want of instruction, it is exceedingly difficult to arrive at any degree of excellence, and therefore few make the attempt. Vanity, or enthusiasm, have wrought upon some to adopt the second method; on which account, they are as much despised and avoided, by men of sense and taste, as they are followed and admired, by fools and fanatics. But the bulk of our public speakers, hopeless of attaining the perfection necessary to the third method, and studious to avoid the ill-consequences of the second, of course fall into the first; in which, by not pretending to any merit, they disarm censure; and pass through life contented without honour, provided they escape disgrace.

Such being the state of public elocution, few people can reap either profit or pleasure from it. Men therefore in general have recourse to books, both for instruction and entertainment. This sort of entertainment is in its own nature a selfish one, as the exercise

ercise is performed alone, and the reader has no one to participate of his satisfaction. Nor is there a greater enemy to facility of utterance, than a habit of silent reading; or which more disqualifies persons from making a figure in conversation.

But it may be said, that though in the present state of public elocution, the social feelings are not exercised, and that silent reading contributes to destroy them for want of communication, which alone can give them vigour and spirit; yet when men come to mix with the world, both in private and public societies, they will find that this deficiency is amply made up by conversation; and that all the social feelings, all the delicate sensibilities of our nature, will be regulated, and duly exercised, by keeping good company. Indeed if the usual topics of conversation are of that nature, and if the world abounds in persons who deliver themselves upon such topics with feeling and taste, such an effect might reasonably be expected. But if we examine the general state of conversation amongst us, we shall find that it is rather calculated, like that of public elocution, to render us un'social, or dis'social, than social beings. The bulk of mankind may be divided into four classes. The first, and most numerous, consists of the insipids; who, having little knowledge, little feeling, and less power of communicating them, are sure they can make no figure in conversation; and in order to conceal their deficiency, hide themselves in perpetual crowds; run to all public places, routs, assemblies, opera, playhouse, &c. These always wear the same countenance, have but one set of phrases, which they adapt to all topics, and speak in the bon ton, that is, without any change of tone at all. They would not for the world discover any emotion, either by look, gesture or voice; and by a constant habit of suppressing their signs, they at last come to subdue the emotions themselves. Even laugh'ter, that happy gift of our Maker, to gladden the heart of man, is looked upon by some of these to be a breach of decorum, and therefore they take great pains to suppress it. Thus having little pretensions to rationality, the distinguishing property of man, according to some philosophers; or to risibility, according to others; they have no other characteristic mark of human creatures, but that of walking upon two legs, with indeed the additional circumstance of being always well dressed. These beings by degrees lose all feeling, and thus are rendered un'social by society. Numbers of this class are to be found among what is commonly called the best company.

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The second class, may be called the Disputants; who, having collected from books a heap of undigested knowledge, and a very awkward and inaccurate manner of setting it forth in discourse, are engaged in endless controversies and wrangles, maintained with great warmth and violence, to the no small rousing and invigorating of all the worst passions of man, pride, envy, hatred and malice. And thus are these men rendered dissocial by society, and may justly be called bad company.

The third class, consists of the smarts and the wits; who have only such a smattering of knowledge, as to look down with contempt on the insipids, and to make sport of the disputants. Their favourite enjoyment, is a perpetual ridicule of all that is serious and good; they attempt to laugh others, and really laugh themselves, out of all social feelings; and seem to think risibility the true characteristic of man. These are dreaded and avoided by the Insipids; called bad company by the Disputants; and reckoned mighty good company, by fools and themselves.

The fourth class, is made up of those, who give themselves up to sensuality, voluptuousness, and profligacy of all sorts; who constantly acting against the principles, upon which the noblest purposes of society are founded, may justly be termed Antisocialists, and called the worst company in the world.

It is much to be wished, that the number of those, whose conversation can at once enlighten the understanding, delight the fancy, and make the heart distend with benevolent sensations, by means of a happy union of the two languages of art and nature, were so great as to form a fifth class; but rarely are such men to be found; and more rarely have they an opportunity of exerting their talents, in the dissonance of mixed company, not tuned to their pitch. Happy the man who can find such a one, to be the chosen companion of his private hours; or who can now and then pick out a select set, to participate of the satisfaction, which such a one is capable of diffusing, through persons of nice sensibility and just taste.

It cannot be denied that the improvement of conversation, would greatly contribute to improve our manners, and make us take delight in rational society. The way to improve our conversation, is, to make that a chief object of attention, in the education of our youth, of both sexes, by instructing them in all the points essential to it, instead of leaving it, as we do now, to chance. To attend to their speech, from their first efforts to articulate,

articulate, to the ut'most perfection of a refined elocution. To make them study the precise méaning of all the words and phrases in their native tongue. By constant practice both in reciting the best works, and their own extemporaneous comments upon them, to give them a facility, and elegance of expression. All this will be done of course, if we will only make the living language, as it ought to be, our first object of attention; and consider the written one, as it should be, only in a secondary light. The way to do this is obvious. To form writers, you train them from the beginning, in the art and practice of writing; to form speakers, you must train them from the beginning, in the art and practice of speaking. This would be the most effectual way, to check the progress of that sordid principle, selfishness, the nourisher of every vice; and to give vigour to that noble one, benevolence, the source of every virtue.

DISCOURSE IV.

IN my three former discourses, I endeavoured to point out the advantages which would result from the revival of the art of oratory, with relation to three different articles. The first, with regard to the improvement of human nature itself, in cultivating and displaying all the nobler faculties of man. The second, with respect to the benefits which would result from it to the female part of our species. And the last, with regard to the general improvement of conversation, manners, and politeness. I shall now, take up the subject in a higher tone, and endeavour to shew the absolute necessity there is, for the revival of that art, to preserve the boasted constitution of Great Britain from inevitable destruction, by restoring to its due vigour the almost worn out principle, by which alone it can be maintained for any length of time; I mean religion. But as that is an article, which our short-sighted politicians have not, for many years, seemed to consider as at all essential to the state, an opinion which has been too fatally propagated through the land, I shall endeavour in the first place to prove, that however religion may be considered, in all other species of government, as only contributing to the well-being of the state, yet in that of Great Britain alone, it is essential

tial to its very existence for any length of time. And afterwards I shall shew how it may be restor'd to its due health and vigour, from the present deplorable state of weakness, to which it has been reduced among us.

Every kind of government hath its nature, its end, and its principle. Its nature, is its particular constitution or construction to answer some end; its end, is that which is sought after by such constitution; and its principle, consists in the means used to compass that end. From this view, it is evident that the principle is the most essential part; is the soul of government, which puts it into motion, which gives it life and action. The best constitution in the world, and framed to the best end, without a principle, is nothing but a name; and without a right one, must necessarily be destroy'd; for, if the principle be wrong, a different end will be pursued, from that which was the object of its institution. It follows also, that the principle should be suited to the end, not only in its nature, but in its degree of power and strength; for so far as it falls short of the end, so far is the government weak and defective.

The natural order of inquiry therefore will be, whether we have a principle; whether the principle be suited to the nature of our government; and whether it be of force enough to answer the end.

All the different forms of government known in the world, may be reduced to three species; the republican, monarchical, and despotic. To these, the celebrated Montesquieu has annexed three different principles. To the republican, virtue; to the monarchical, honour; and to the despotic, fear. In the first, and last of these, he has incontestibly proved, that neither species of government could possibly subsist, but must change to some other form, upon any other principles than these. But in what relates to the monarchical, he has not shewn that clearness and precision, which are manifested in the rest of his work. As he seems to have formed his idea of monarchy, entirely from that under which he was born, so he has laid down rules in general for it, from the particular practice of that state. He hath accurately distinguished between the two republican forms, the Aristocratic and Democratic, and he has shewn the different manner, in which the principle of virtue is to operate in those different forms; nor was there less reason to distinguish between the different forms of monarchy; the less limited, approaching

to the despotic; and the more limited, bordering upon the republican. It will not require much penetration to discover, that such a monarchy as that of England, cannot subsist upon his principle of honour. To convince an Englishman of this, there needs only to present him with part of the description which he himself gives of that principle. By the laws of honour, he says, 'that the actions of men are not judged as good; but as shining; not as just, but as great; not as reasonable, but extraordinary. To this whimsical honour it is owing, that the virtues are only just what it pleases; it adds rules of its own invention, to every thing prescribed to us; it extends, or limits our duties, according to its own fancy, whether they proceed from religion, politics, or morality. There is nothing so strongly inculcated in monarchies, by the laws, by religion, and honour, as submission to the prince's will.'

What are the necessary consequences of such a principle? Montesquieu himself has described them in glaring colours, in another place.

'Ambition, joined to idleness, and baseness, to pride; a desire of obtaining riches without labour; and an aversion to truth; flattery, treason, perfidy, violation of engagements, contempt of civil duties, fear of the prince's virtue, hope from his weakness; and above all, a perpetual ridicule cast upon virtue.'

Whether this baneful principle, so incompatible with the British constitution, has not, amongst other weeds, been transplanted into our soil, from a neighbouring country, each man's own observation will best inform him.

As the professed intention of Montesquieu was, to treat accurately of all the various governments known in the world, and their several principles; it is evident that he has been defective in the execution of one part of his design. For though from his own description, he found that our form of government, would not come exactly under any of the heads, into which he had distinguished them; though he has allotted a separate chapter, to treat of our constitution as a distinct species from any other; yet he has not thought proper to say one syllable about the principle by which it may be preserved, but has contented himself with foretelling the means by which it will probably be destroyed. Let us try therefore whether this deficiency cannot be supplied, and whether we may not be able to discover the only principle, by

by which it is possible that our noble constitution can be supported and preserved.

As our constitution is made up of a due mixture of the three species of government, being partly monarchical, partly republican, and partly absolute; it follows that no one particular principle, belonging to any of those, will be sufficient to answer its end, though all three may be employed in it to advantage. The bulk of the people should be bred up to fear the laws, which should be considered as vested with despotic power. The legislative or republican part, should have virtue for its object. And the principle of honour, may be employed by the executive, or royal authority, with success. By honour, I do not here mean that bastard kind before described, but that genuine refined sort arising from a love of fame, and the rewards attending it; which often supplied the place of virtue in republics.

From this view, we may see the necessity there is for some other principle, to regulate these. For when three different principles, act in one state, without any subordination, or necessary dependence of the one on the other, it would be found impossible to confine each, within its due bounds, so that no one should become predominant; and as such predominance of any one of these, over the others, must necessarily bring about a change in the constitution, the thing to be wished is, that a principle of superior force, to any, or all of these together, should be established; whose office it should be to preserve the balance between the others, to restrain them within their due limits, and confine them to their proper objects. Nor have we far to seek for such a principle; it can be no other than that of religion.

To the great power and energy of this principle, Montesquieu himself has borne testimony; for though he never mentioned it as a necessary one to any of the forms of government which he treats of, yet he occasionally says, in a part of his work not professedly upon that point, 'that the principles of Christianity, deeply engraved on the heart, would be infinitely more powerful, than the false honour of monarchies; than the humane virtues of republics; or the servile fear of despotic states.' Now as he had allowed in his examination of the British constitution, that it was the noblest, and most perfect form of government upon earth, so must it also be allowed, that it ought to have

have the noblest and most perfect principle to support it; which, by his own confession, is that of true Christianity.

Nothing is more strictly demonstrable, than that no species of government can long subsist, without one of these four principles. With regard to virtue or public spirit, it is so far from operating as a general principle, that it hardly exists amongst us, except in idea; and the very notion of reducing it to practice, is become a subject of ridicule. With respect to honour, it is to be feared that little of the genuine kind remains amongst us, and that we abound too much in that false species, which, among many other bad qualities, we have imported from our neighbours. And with regard to fear, or reverence for the laws, the open violation, and bold defiance of them, in such multitudes of all ranks and orders, plainly shew that they have lost much of their force. If we should be without religion too, we should then be a state without any principle, and consequently ready for any change, that chance, design, or force may bring about.

The famous Bishop of Cloyne has drawn but too just a picture of the depravity of the times, and the cause of it, in a discourse addressed to magistrates, where he says, 'The pretensions and discourses of men, throughout these kingdoms, would, at first view, lead one to think that the inhabitants are all politicians; and yet perhaps, political wisdom hath in no age or country, been more talked of, or less understood'. Licence, is taken for the end of government, and popular humour, for its origin. No reverence for the laws, no attachment to the constitution; little attention to matters of consequence, and great altercations about trifles; such idle projects about religion and government, as if the public had both to choose; a general contempt of all authority, divine and human; an indifference about the prevailing opinions, whether they tend to produce order or disorder, to promote the empire of God, or the devil; these are the symptoms that strongly mark the present age; and this could never have been the case, if a neglect of religion had not made way for it.'

If all this be true, as it undoubtedly is, there cannot be a subject of more importance, than to trace the cause of this general decay of religion amongst us; and to point out the means of restoring the sole principle, by which our constitution can be upheld, to its pristine vigour.

Amid the many inquiries made into the causes of the decay of religion, and consequential advances of infidelity for many years past, it appears to me that the chief source of both, has escaped observation; which is, a material defect in the education of those destined for holy orders; I mean a neglect of cultivating the powers of oratory. In what I have to offer on this subject, I would not be understood to throw the least reflection upon the clergy; an order of men for whom I have the highest respect; on the contrary, I mean in the close of this discourse, to stand forth their champion, and rescue them from that load of blame, which has been constantly, with equal ignorance and injustice, thrown upon them, for an article in which they are no way in fault; I mean the want of the powers of elocution. And yet that the decay of religion, has been chiefly owing to the want of those powers in the priesthood, occasioned by a neglect of cultivating them in our course of education, is what I shall endeavour to prove in the remaining part of this discourse.

There are two ways, by which the purity of religion and its precepts, may be defended; by speaking, and by writing. Speech, is the immediate gift of God, who has annexed to it, when cultivated by man, and brought to perfection, powers almost miraculous, and an energy nearly divine. He has given to it, tones, to charm the ear, and penetrate the heart; he has joined to it, action and looks, to move the inmost soul. By that, attention is kept up without pain, and conviction carried to the mind with delight. Persuasion, is ever its attendant, and the passions, own it for a master. Great as is the force of its powers, so unbounded is their extent. All mankind are capable of its impressions; the ignorant, as well as the wise, the illiterate, as well as the learned.

Writing, is the invention of man; a mere work of art, and therefore can contain no natural power. Its use is, to give stability to sound, and permanence to thought. To preserve words, that otherwise might perish as they are spoke, and to arrest ideas, that might vanish as they rise in the mind. To assist the memory, in treasuring these up; and to convey knowledge at distance, through the eye, where it could find no entrance by the ear.

The vast superiority of the former over the latter, is obvious enough from this view. There is not any power belonging to the latter, which the former, wherever its influence can be exerted, does not possess in a more eminent degree. Whereas there

there are man'y powers belonging to the fôrmer, in which the lat'ter has no share. That' works by the whole force of artific'ial, as well as nat'ural means; this', by artific'ial means ónly. None but the lear'ned, can receive benefit from the on'e; all mankind, from the oth'er. The one indeed should be considered only as the han'dmaid of the other, and employed chiefly in such' offices, as she can'not do in her ówn person.

Should therefore our clergy desert the strong nat'ural means, given by God' himsel'f, to support religion and morality; should they have recourse to the we'ak, the artific'ial, the mere invention of man'; is it strange that their holy cause should suffer. In attempting to support it chiefly by polem'ical writings, have they not quitted their prop'er arms, and fastnesses, to engage the enemy at their ówn weap'ons, and upon their ówn ground. By the on'e, they might command the pass'ions of mankind, and gain them entirely to their side; in the oth'er, the pass'ions, prejudices, and temporal interests of men, were too much again'st them, to expect they should be impártial judges, of what was coolly offered to their understanding. In the fôrmer, the clergy had the field entirely to themselves; nó antagonist could rise up after them, to erase whatever impress'ions their oratory had made. In the lat'ter, they had as many ad'versaries, as ple'ased to take the field; skilled in all the weapons of log'ic, and armed with the full force of rid'icule; which was but too likely to make strong impress'ions upon minds, that were prepossessed again'st them and their doctrines. How was it possible therefore that they should not lóse their cause, when brought before prej'udiced judges; or how could they expect that trúth should prevail, when rid'icule, not re'ason, was set up to be its test'.

By this method, our divines have not only changed their celestial armour, made by God himself, for such as was the workmanship of imperfect man; their weapons tempered in pure æth'e'rial fire, for those of brittle steel; they have also swer'ed from the exam'ple, and deser'ted the meth'od pointed out by their divine fóunder. It was by pre'aching, not w'riting, that our blessed Sa'viour propagated his doctrines. His example was followed by the Apostles, who committed nothing to w'riting, but plain matter of fact, and unadorned precepts. It was the gift of the tong'ue, not the pen', which was miraculously bestowed on the Apostles; and it is to be supposed when they addressed the different nations, in their different languages, that they did it
with

with force and energy. In what sort of sounds, with what kind of gesture, must St. Paul have spoken, when Félix trembled? With what power of oratory, must he have addressed the Athenians, when that polished people, looked upon him with such admiration? And what must have been the force of his eloquence, when the men of Lystra called him Mercury, and would have paid him divine honours?

The study, or neglect of this art, cannot possibly be a matter of indifference to us. It must be productive of the best, or be attended with the worst consequences. It must either effectually support religion, against all opposition, or be the principal means of its destruction. The Church-service, according as it is either well or ill administered, must excite great emotions, or set people to sleep; it must give delight, or occasion disgust; it must carry conviction of truth with it, or appear fictitious. And indeed nothing can contribute more strongly to make the latter opinion prevail, than hearing its doctrines delivered in tones and accents quite foreign from nature and truth. In this, as in life, the general maxim will hold good, that before you can persuade a man into any opinion, he must first be convinced, that you believe it yourself. This he can never be, unless the tones of voice, in which you speak, come from the heart, accompanied by corresponding looks and gestures, which naturally result from a man who speaks in earnest. On this account, whenever we see those strong stamps of truth, made in nature's mint, the coin passes current, and the words are taken for sterling; where they are not very obvious, we suspect counterfeits; and where they are absent, we suppose the metal is base.

If this be so, what must necessarily be the consequence of the manner in which our Church-service is too frequently performed. Must not truth itself pass for falsehood, when covered all over with her veil. If none of the natural criterions, by which she is distinguished, appear, must not all pass for fictitious. How can a clergyman hope to gain belief to what he utters, when he utters it not in such a manner, as if he believed it himself. This therefore may be considered as the great source of irreligion; nor would it be a very confident assertion to say, that this defect in the ministry, has made more infidels, than all the arts and subtleties of the enemies to religion, put together.

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For as it must be allowed, that the divine service, is too often performed in a slovenly and disagreeable, or else in a cold and unaffecting manner; it follows that many of nicer taste are kept away from places of religious worship, through disgust; and they who continue to frequent them, may easily be made the worse by it, but can hardly receive much benefit. Their devotion cannot be raised, however it may flag, by hearing prayers ill read; nor will the doctrines from the pulpit, acquire new force or credit, by being delivered in a lifeless manner, and in unnatural tones. The experience of mankind may be appealed to upon this occasion, whether it is not generally confessed in words, as well as shewn in practice, that they perform this ceremony more out of decency and example, than from any assistance they find there to devotion, or any benefit from the sermon; and indeed were they not to confess it, the general coldness and inattention, the levity in the behaviour of some, and drowsiness even to profound sleep in others, necessarily infused by the opiate of a dull monotony, would too plainly evince the truth of the observation.

It is chiefly owing to this defect in the ministry, that the sacred order has not been able to maintain that superior rank and influence in the world, to which in its own nature it is entitled. That it has in itself a pre-eminence over all others, may be seen in the beautiful account given of the institution by the Guardian. 'If, says he, to inform the understanding, and regulate the will, is the most lasting and diffusive benefit, there will not be found so useful and excellent an institution, as that of the Christian priesthood, which is now become the scorn of fools. That a numerous order of men should be consecrated to the study of the most sublime and beneficial truths, with a design to propagate them by their discourses and writings; to inform their fellow-creatures of the being and attributes of the Deity; to possess their minds with the sense of a future state; and not only to explain the nature of every virtue and moral duty, but likewise to persuade mankind to the practice of them, by the most powerful and engaging motives; is a thing so excellent, and necessary to the well-being of the world, that no body but a modern free-thinker could have the forehead, or folly, to turn it into ridicule.'

But neither the scorn of fools, nor the ridicule of free-thinkers, could in the least affect, or depreciate an institution so excellent in its nature, so necessary to the welfare of mankind, if the ministry

ministry were really equal to the discharge of their office, in the most essential point. Their chief end is, to inform the understanding, and regulate the will of others. The first, cannot be done, unless their own ideas are conveyed into the minds of others, with perspicuity and force; nor the last, unless the passions of men are wrought upon, to excite them to good works, and deter them from such as are evil; inasmuch as the passions are known to be the great movers to, or restrainers from action; neither of which can be done without skill in oratory. All other requisites to the priesthood, though possessed in the most eminent degree, without that, will never answer its end. This is the preacher's instrument with which he is to work; and without this, his knowledge and piety are of little more use to the world, than the skill of a painter would be, without pencil or colours; or that of a musician, without the power of conveying sounds. Possessed of this, no artist whatever is more equal to the completion of his designs; for though the difficulty of arriving at the end, be suitable to its utility and grandeur, and consequently beyond that of all others, yet the means are proportioned and adequate to the mighty work. For who upon earth can be compared in faculties and powers to the man, in whom are united the true philosopher, the Christian hero, and the potent orator? Or how could such precepts fail of having their desired effect, which are founded on reason, supported by revelation, confirmed by the living example of the preacher, and impressed on the yielding mind by the irresistible charms of eloquence?

Mr. Addison, in speaking upon this subject, has the following passage: "The light in which these points should be exposed to the view of one who is prejudiced against the names, religion, church, priest, and the like, is to consider the clergy, as so many philosophers, the churches, as schools, and their sermons, as lectures, for the information and improvement of the audience. How would the heart of Socrates or Tully have rejoiced, had they lived in a nation, where the law had made provision for philosophers, to read lectures of morality and theology every seventh day, in several thousands of schools erected at the public charge throughout the whole country; at which lectures, all ranks and sexes, without distinction, were obliged to be present, for their general improvement? And what wicked wretches would they think those men, who should endeavour to defeat the purpose of so divine an institution?"

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What Mr. Addison has here advanced, would have had much more force, had he substituted the word orators, in the room of philosophers; and this would probably have been the case, could his assertion have been warranted by practice. By orators, I mean such as they were of old, when none were thought worthy of that title, but such as were at the same time philosophers. The separation of philosophy from oratory, was the main cause that both were in a short time destroyed. Of this rupture Cicero gives the following account. "The ancients, down to the time of Socrates, always joined a perfect knowledge of morality, of all that belonged to the conduct of private life, as well as the management of public affairs, to skill in oratory. But at that time, the eloquent and the learned, being divided into different sects by Socrates, and this distinction being afterwards kept up by all his disciples, the philosophers and orators held each other in mutual contempt." Nothing contributed so much to widen this breach, as the want of some profession among the ancients, to which a union of these was necessary. But if we look into the present times, we shall quickly see that the case is different. The profession amongst us, which is foremost in point of rank, utility, and number, evidently requires it. It would be hard to say, whether philosophy or oratory be most necessary to our priesthood, as the one, would be useless, without the other. Without knowledge, eloquence would be but an empty sound; without eloquence, knowledge can never be shewn in its true light. The long dispute between the two, was well determined by Cicero, in the following manner. *"When there is occasion, as it often happens, to speak concerning the immortal Gods, to treat of piety, of concord, of friendship, of the common rights of citizens, of men, and nations; of equity, temperance, magnanimity, and every kind of virtue; I suppose all the academies and schools of philosophy will cry out, that all subjects of this kind are their property, and do not at all belong to the orator; to whom when I allow that they shall have the liberty of haranguing upon these points in every corner, to employ their idle time, yet I shall make no scruple to determine, that it is peculiarly the orator's province, to explain these subjects with dignity, and pleasure to his hearers; concerning which these men hold formal disputations, in a lean and lifeless discourse."* Can there be a more accurate description of the proper discharge of the function of the Christian priesthood? To this order of men therefore, a reunion of these arts

arts is not only necessary, but there are the strongest motives to encourage the attempt. All the means requisite to carry oratory to its highest pitch, are furnished to them in a more liberal manner, than they ever were to any other profession. Quintilian, in speaking of the means by which oratory might reach the summit of perfection, has a remarkable passage, which seems exactly applicable to the Christian priesthood; where he wishes, 'that oratory might regain its pristine dignity and power, by being restored to its possessions in philosophy; and that this should be effected by the establishment of some superiour order, with whom oratory, being most necessary, should hold the first rank, and philosophy be considered only as her hand-maid. That by the authority of this order their several claims should be adjusted, and the odious distinction of names be destroyed. That neither should any longer pretend to sovereign authority, but both in due subordination serve one common master.' How would it have rejoiced the heart of Quintilian, could he have seen his wish accomplished in the establishment of an order of men *'to whom a perfect knowledge of all things divine and human was necessary, to shine forth not only in their words, but in their lives; an order, such as no antiquity ever beheld; which uniting in itself the full powers of oratory and philosophy, in their largest extent, should enable men to communicate the most perfect knowledge, in the most perfect manner.'* With what rapture must he have beheld oratory raised to a higher office, and a more exalted rank, than ever it could even claim before; no longer ministering to the purposes of mere mortal and earthly masters, but immediately employed in the service of the Most High, of God himself. Whilst philosophy, humbled from her proud pretensions, should be content to minister to her former rival. Such an office for oratory could never have entered into the thoughts of a He'athen, as the gross absurdities of their religion, and ridiculous ideas of their gods, required the obscurity of mystery, and dark veil of superstition, but would by no means bear the light; oratory therefore, whose office it is to throw a strong light upon all which it handles, must necessarily be banished from its ministry. How would the august union of eloquence and philosophy with the sacred office, have struck the ancients with admiration and astonishment; and considering the greatness of their powers when separate, what glorious effects would they not expect, from the joint endeavours of religion, oratory,

oratory, and philosophy, all mutually supporting and assisting
 each other, in bringing about the noblest ends, the general good
 of society, and happiness of each individual. How much higher
 must their expectations be raised, when they should consider the
 purity of our religion, the unearthly and exalted notions which
 we entertain of the Deity, and the salutary system of laws for
 his conduct in life, promulgated to man, by his great Author
 and Creator. Would not Socrates himself, think philosophy
 raised and dignified, beyond his utmost conception, when
 ministering to oratory in such glorious purposes. Would they
 not all join with one voice to felicitate such a people, and say
 ' O happy nation, to whom the noblest and most import'ant
 ' truths, which were darkly seen, and as through a mist, by
 ' only a few, and those the wisest of the heathen world, are re-
 ' vealed in full meridian light, and like the sun visible to all
 ' eyes; like that luminary communicating light and heat to
 ' all, to the low, as well as the high; to the weak in under-
 ' standing, as well as to those of the most improved talents.
 ' And you, ye holy men, highly favoured of Heaven above all
 ' others, in whose divine institution are united all the greatest
 ' powers which God has given to man, let us with love and ad-
 ' miration contemplate the beauty of your sacred function, and
 ' with wonder and delight examine its stupendous frame.
 ' Happy men, whose order must command respect and reve-
 ' rence to your persons; whose talents must conciliate to you
 ' the esteem and love of mankind. Employed from your ear-
 ' liest days in treasuring up knowledge and wisdom, not to lie
 ' concealed, like the miser's hoard, but to be displayed to the
 ' eyes of men, enriching the beholders, without impoverishing
 ' yourselves, and by the very act of communication, increasing
 ' not diminishing your store. Thrice happy orators, who enjoy
 ' all the delight, the praise, the perfection of your art, with-
 ' out the difficulties, the labours, the dangers that attended it
 ' of old. You need no pains to procure silence, no arts to en-
 ' gage attention; the sanctity of the temple ensures the one;
 ' the importance and interesting nature of the subject to all
 ' hearers, commands the other. Secure in your celestial armour,
 ' though you attack the wicked with force and might, you need
 ' fear no enemies; and the Philips and Anthonies of the world,
 ' may be lashed by you without danger. Equal to us in all the
 ' arts of captivating the senses, how much more lordly is your

‘ sway over the imagination, and the passions. What vigorous
 ‘ flights may you not lead fancy, when freed from the fetters
 ‘ of matter, through spiritual regions, and a boundless eternity,
 ‘ till this world, shall appear but as a speck, and its duration,
 ‘ but as a point of time. How infinitely more powerful must the
 ‘ exertions of hope and fear be, in proportion to the immensity
 ‘ of their object. What were the conquests of Alexander or
 ‘ Cæsar, compared to yours? Theirs, were over men, over
 ‘ their brethren; yours, are over the enemies to human nature,
 ‘ over sin, and over death!’

But should these sages of antiquity be told that things were quite otherwise; that vice and libertinism were never known to have arrived at a greater pitch, in any age or country; that virtue was neglected, or ridiculed; and religion, far from answering its end, was, together with the priesthood, held in contempt; must they not either conclude, that the people, were the most stupid and hardened in the world; or that they who were dedicated to the service of the church, were not properly qualified to discharge their office. When they should be told that no order ever produced such numbers of men distinguished for knowledge and wisdom; remarkable for purity of morals, and sanctity of life; that their discourses in the cause of religion and virtue, were some of the noblest productions that ever came from the wit of man; they would be apt to suffer the former opinion to take place. But when they should also be told, that in the education of these men, though great care was taken to instruct them in philosophy, and to store their minds with variety of knowledge, yet there was not the smallest attention given to the art of communicating these to others by speech; that so far from training them in the study and practice of oratory, their very first principles of speaking were corrupted by the most ignorant teachers, and that this error was never afterwards amended; that in consequence of this, they delivered the words of truth, in the tones of fiction; and that some of their preachers, the most eminent for composition, were so far from delighting, that they disgusted their hearers, by the badness of their delivery; the whole wonder would at once vanish. They would then see that the priesthood was no longer that powerful order which they had imagined; and however robust the body might appear, however beautiful the form; they would perceive that it was still no more than form and body, to which the animating
 soul

soul was wanting, to display that beauty, by due expression, and exert that vigour, with proper force.

Indeed it is so evident, that the proper arms for the use of the members of the church-militant here on earth, for the soldiers in Christ, can be drawn from no other stores, but those of oratory, that it is astonishing how it could possibly be so entirely neglected. Nor can this fault be at all imputed to the clergy, but to a defective education. We might as well blame the Chinese women for want of the perfect use of their limbs in walking, as those, for want of powers in speaking. Let such of the laity as are apt so freely and so unjustly to throw out their censures on the clergy in this respect, ask themselves, whether they could do better were they in their place. And have the clergy any advantage over the laity in their course of education, that we should expect greater perfection from them in that point? But it will be said, that as it is more necessary to the clergy, in order to the proper discharge of the public duty, they ought to take more pains to render themselves perfect in it. 'Tis granted; and as it is evidently their interest to be possessed of this accomplishment, so it is their wish; and I believe that numbers of them have tried all the means in their power to attain it. But will all the pains in the world make men see their own habitual faults contracted from childhood; or if they see them, will they point out the ways of amending them. If a person were early taught to sing in a very bad taste, and continued to practice in that style to manhood, would he find it easy to change it, upon being told that his manner was bad? Could he have any hopes of doing so, without putting himself into the hands of a proper master? This is enough to elucidate the whole. The man who has been ill taught to sing, or contracted a bad manner from imitation, may be set right, because there are skilful masters to be found in the art of music. But the man who has been ill taught to read, or has contracted a bad habit of speaking, has no hopes of a cure, because there are no skilful masters in the art of delivery to be found; and without such aid, he must ever use that mode of utterance, which is habitual to him. If indeed there were establishments made for the regular teaching of that art, so as that it should become a necessary part of education; any one destined to holy orders, who should neglect the means of improving himself, in so important a branch of his profession, would justly deserve censure;
 nay

may in that case, it is highly probable that it would become a necessary qualification to the admission into the holy office.

If there be any one who should, in opposition to what has been advanced make use of the common-place arguments to shew, that oratory is not only unnecessary, but even unfit to be used in the pulpit; I shall answer him in the words of a man, who must be allowed to be of undoubted authority, I mean St. Austin; who in his fourth book on the Christian doctrine has the following passage.

‘ Since it is by the art of rhetoric that people are enabled to establish true and false opinions, who shall dare to say that truth should be without arms, in the persons of those who are to defend it against falsehood? Can it be believed that those who endeavour to enforce a false doctrine, should be skilled in the art of conciliating to themselves the good-will and attention of their hearers, by their address; and that those who support the cause of truth, should not be possessed of this skill? That the one, should speak of what is false, with brevity and verisimilitude; and the other, shall discourse of what is true, in so tedious, disgusting, and unnatural a manner, as to give pain to their hearers, and make them think their doctrines not credible; that those, should combat truth with false arguments, and establish false opinions; and that these, should neither be capable of defending, what is true, nor of confuting, what is false; that the former, should have such power over the minds of their hearers, as to lead them whither they please; that they should be able to excite in them astonishment, sadness, or joy; that they should animate, move, and turn them as they think proper; and that the latter, should remain cold, unaffecting, and without power; who can be so absurd as to admit so extravagant a thought? Since therefore eloquence, which has a prodigious power in persuading people either to false or true opinions, lies open to all who are inclined to make use of it, what can be the reason that the good do not employ themselves in acquiring an art, so necessary for the defence of truth?’ Such were the sentiments of that great man, who proved experimentally the justness of his doctrine. The chief labour of whose life was, the cultivation of the oratorial powers; and who has recorded many wonderful effects produced by them on multitudes.

In short, when was it that Christianity made its rapid progress? It was in the early days, when the talents for elocution

were

were cultivated by the ministry, and when the preachers spoke with force and power. When was it that its progress was stopped, and gave way to infidelity? It was in latter times, after the revival of letters; when the powers of speech were neglected, and those of writing were substituted in their place. The form of preaching remained, but the spirit was gone. The divines changed their sharp sword for a foil, which only served to invite the attacks of their enemies; nor were their bucklers of paper, found of sufficient strength, to resist the edge of satire, and the keen-pointed sting of ridicule. What is there now wanting, but to restore to the clergy the use of their true weapon? Let there be but half the pains taken about the tongue, that are now employed about the pen; let the cause of the living God, be pleaded by the living voice; religion, will once again rear her head; morality will flourish; and vice and infidelity, will soon quit the field.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT,

FROM THE SPECTATOR, &c.

THE well reading of the common-prayer is of great importance, and so much neglected, that I take the liberty to offer to your consideration some particulars on that subject. And what more worthy your observation than this? A thing so public, and of so high consequence. It is indeed wonderful, that the frequent exercise of it should not make the performers of that duty more expert in it. This inability, as I conceive, proceeds from the little care that is taken of their reading, while boys, and at school, where, when they are got into Latin, they are looked upon as above English, the reading of which is wholly neglected, or at least read to very little purpose, without any due observations made to them of the proper accent and manner of reading; by this means they have acquired such ill habits as will not easily be removed. The only way that I know of to remedy this, is to propose some person of great ability that way as a pattern for them; example being most effectual to convince the learned, as well as instruct the ignorant.

You must know, Sir, I have been a constant frequenter of the service of the church of England for above these four years last past,

past, and until Sunday was seven-night never discovered, to so great a degree, the excellency of the common-prayer. When being at St. James's Garlick-Hill church, I heard the service read so distinctly, so emphatically, and so fervently, that it was next to an impossibility to be inattentive. My eyes and my thoughts could not wander as usual, but were confined to my prayers. I then considered I addressed myself to the Almighty, and not to a beautiful face. And when I reflected on my former performances of that duty, I found I had run it over as a matter of form, in comparison to the manner in which I then discharged it. My mind was really affected, and fervent wishes accompanied my words. The Confession was read with such resigned humility, the Absolution with such a comfortable authority, the Thanksgivings with such a religious joy, as made me feel those affections of the mind in a manner I never did before. To remedy therefore the grievance above complained of, I humbly propose, that this excellent Reader, upon the next and every annual assembly of the clergy of Sion-College, and all other conventions, should read prayers before them. For then those that are afraid of stretching their mouths, and spoiling their soft voices, will learn to read with clearness, loudness, and strength. Others that affect a rakish negligent air by folding their arms and lolling on their book, will be taught a decent behaviour, and comely erection of body. Those that read so fast as if impatient of their work, may learn to speak deliberately. There is another sort of persons whom I call Pindaric readers, as being confined to no set measure; these pronounce five or six words with great deliberation, and the five or six subsequent ones with as great celerity: the first part of a sentence with a very exalted voice, and the latter part with a submissive one: sometimes again, with one sort of a tone, and immediately after with a very different one. These gentlemen will learn of my admired reader an evenness of voice and delivery, and all who are innocent of these affectations, but read with such an indifferency, as if they did not understand the language, may then be informed of the art of reading movingly and fervently, how to place the emphasis, and give the proper accent to each word, and how to vary the voice according to the nature of the sentence. There is certainly a very great difference between the reading a Prayer and a Gazette, which I beg of you to inform a set of readers, who affect, forsooth, a certain gentleman-like familiarity of tone, and mend the language

as they go on, crying instead of " pardoneth and absolveth," " pardons and absolves." These are often pretty classical scholars, and would think it an unpardonable sin to read Virgil or Martial with so little taste as they do Divine Service.

As the matter of worship is now managed, in various Dissenting Congregations, you find insignificant words and phrases raised by a lively vehemence; in our own churches, the most exalted sense depreciated, by a dispassionate indolence. If the gentlemen who err in this kind would please to recollect the many pleasantries they have read upon those who recite good things with an ill grace, they would go on to think that what in that case is only ridiculous, in themselves is impious. But leaving this to their own reflections, I shall conclude with what Cæsar said upon the irregularity of tone in one who read before him, " Do you read or sing? If you sing, you sing very ill."

SPECTATOR, Vol. 2, No. 147.

ON ORATORIAL DELIVERY,

BY MR. ADDISON.

MOST foreign writers who have given any character of the English nation, whatever vices they ascribe to it, allow in general, that the people are naturally modest. It proceeds perhaps from this our national virtue, that our orators are observed to make use of less gesture or action than those of other countries. Our preachers stand stock still in the pulpit, and will not so much as move a finger to set off the best sermons in the world. We meet with the same speaking statues at our bar, and in all public places of debate. Our words flow from us in a smooth continued stream, without those strainings of the voice, motions of the body, and majesty of the hand, which are so much celebrated in the orators of Greece and Rome. We can talk of life and death in cold blood, and keep our temper in a discourse which turns upon every thing that is dear to us. Though our zeal breaks out in the finest tropes and figures, it is not able to stir a limb about us. I have heard it observed more than once, by those who have seen Italy, that an untravelled Englishman cannot relish all the beauties of Italian pictures, because the postures which are expressed

expressed in them are often such as are peculiar to that country. One who has not seen an Italian in the pulpit, will not know what to make of that noble gesture in Raphael's picture of St. Paul preaching at Athens, where the apostle is represented as lifting up both his arms, and pouring out the thunder of his rhetoric amidst an audience of Pagan philosophers.

It is certain, that proper gestures and vehement expressions of the voice cannot be too much studied by a public orator. They are a kind of comment to what he utters, and enforce every thing he says, with weak hearers, better than the strongest argument he can make use of. They keep the audience awake, and fix their attention to what is delivered to them, at the same time that they shew the speaker is in earnest, and affected himself with what he so passionately recommends to others. Violent gesture and vociferation naturally shake the hearts of the ignorant, and fill them with a kind of religious horror. Nothing is more frequent than to see women weep and tremble at the sight of a moving preacher, though he is placed quite out of their hearing; as in England we very frequently see people lulled asleep with solid and elaborate discourses of piety, who would be warmed, and transported out of themselves, by the bellowing and distortions of enthusiasm.

If nonsense, when accompanied with such an emotion of voice and body, has such an influence on men's minds, what might we not expect from many of those admirable discourses which are extant in our tongue, were they delivered with a becoming fervour, and with the most agreeable graces of voice and gesture?

We are told that the great Latin orator very much impaired his health by the *laterum contentio*, the vehemence of action, with which he used to deliver himself. The Greek orator was likewise so very famous for this particular in rhetoric, that one of his antagonists, whom he had banished from Athens, reading over the oration which had procured his banishment, and seeing his friends admire it, could not forbear asking them, if they were so much affected by the bare reading of it, how much more they would have been alarmed, had they heard him actually throwing out such a storm of eloquence.

How cold and dead a figure, in comparison of these two great men, does an orator often make at the British bar, holding up his head, with the most insipid serenity, and stroking the sides of a long wig that reaches down to his middle? The truth of it is, there is often nothing more ridiculous than the gestures of an
English

English speaker ; you see some of them running their hands into their pockets as far as ever they can thrust them, and others looking with great attention on a piece of paper that has nothing written on it ; you may see many a smart rhetorician turning his hat in his hands, moulding it into several different cocks, examining sometimes the lining of it, and sometimes the button, during the whole course of his harangue. A deaf man would think he was cheapning a beaver, when perhaps he is talking of the fate of the British nation. I remember, when I was a young man, and used to frequent Westminster-hall, there was a counsellor who never pleaded without a piece of packthread in his hand, which he used to twist about a thumb or a finger all the while he was speaking : the wags of those days used to call it the thread of his discourse, for he was unable to utter a word without it. One of his clients, who was more merry than wise, stole it from him one day in the midst of his pleading ; but he had better have let it alone, for he lost his cause by his jest.

SPECTATOR, Vol. 6, No. 407.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS,
ON THE SAME SUBJECT,
FROM THE SPECTATOR, &c.

CICERO concludes his celebrated books *De Oratore*, with some precepts for pronounciation and action, without which part, he affirms, the best orator in the world can never succeed ; and an indifferent one, who is master of that, shall gain much greater applause. What could make a stronger impressiion, says he, than those exclamations of *Gracchus*.—‘ Whither shall I turn ? Wretch that I am ! to what place betake myself ? Shall I go to the capitol ? Alas ! it is overflowed with my brother’s blood. Or shall I retire to my own house ? Yet there I behold my mother plunged in misery, weeping and despairing ! ’—These breaks and turns of passion, it seems, were so enforced by the eyes, voice, and gesture of the speaker, that his very enemies could not refrain from tears. I insist, says *Tully*, upon this the rather,
B b because

because our orators, who are as it were actors of the truth itself, have quitted this manner of speaking; and the players, who are but the imitators of truth, have taken it up.

I shall therefore pursue the hint he has here given me, and for the service of the *British* speaker, shall copy some of the rules which this great *Roman* master has laid down; yet without confining myself wholly to his thoughts or words: and to adapt this essay the more to the purpose for which I intend it, instead of the examples, he has inserted in his discourse, out of the ancient tragedies, I shall make use of parallel passages out of the most celebrated of our own.

The design of art is to assist action as much as possible in the representation of nature; for the appearance of reality is that which moves us in all representations, and these have always the greater force, the nearer they approach to nature, and the less they show of imitation.

Nature herself has assigned, to every emotion of the soul, its peculiar cast of the countenance, tone of voice, and manner or gesture, through the whole person; all the features of the face and tones of the voice, answer, like strings upon musical instruments, to the impressions made on them by the mind. Thus the sounds of the voice, according to the various touches, which raise them, form themselves into an acute or grave, quick or slow, loud or soft tone. These too may be subdivided into various kinds of tones, as the gentle, the rough, the contracted, the diffuse, the continued, the intermitted, the broken, abrupt, winding, softened, or elevated. Every one of these may be employed with art and judgment; and all supply the actor, as colours do the painter, with an expressive variety.

Anger exerts its peculiar voice in an acute, raised, and hurrying sound. The passionate character of *King Lear*, as it is admirably drawn by *Shakespeare*, abounds with the strongest instances of this kind.

- “ ———— Death! Confusion!
- “ Fiery!—what quality?—why *Gloster! Gloster!*
- “ I’d speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.
- “ The King would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
- “ Would with his daughter speak; commands her service:
- “ Are they inform’d of this?—My breath and blood!—
- “ Fiery? the fiery Duke?—Tell the hot Duke;—
- “ Go, tell the Duke and his wife, I’d speak with them

“ Now

“ Now, presently : bid them come forth and hear me,
 “ Or at their chamber-door I’ll beat the drum
 “ ’Till it cry, sleep to death.”

Sorrow and complaint demand a voice quite different, flexible, slow, interrupted, and modulated in a mournful tone ; as in that pathetic soliloquy of cardinal *Wolsey* on his fall.

“ Farewell !—a long farewell to all my greatness !
 “ This is the state of man !——to day he puts forth
 “ The tender leaves of hope ; to-morrow blossoms,
 “ And bears his blushing honours thick upon him ;
 “ The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
 “ And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
 “ His greatness is a ripening, nips his root,
 “ And then he falls as I do.”

We have likewise a fine example of this in the whole part of *Andromache* in *The Distrest Mother*, particularly in these lines,

“ I’ll go, and in the anguish of my heart
 “ Weep o’er my child——If he must die, my life
 “ Is wrapt in his, I shall not long survive.
 “ ’Tis for his sake, that I have suffer’d life,
 “ Groan’d in captivity, and out-lived Hector.
 “ Yes, my Astyanax, we’ll go together !
 “ Together to the realms of night we’ll go ;
 “ There to thy ravish’d eyes thy Sire I’ll show,
 “ And point him out among the shades below.”

Fear expresses itself in a low, hesitating, and abject sound. If the reader considers the following speech of Lady *Macbeth*, while her husband is about the murder of *Duncan* and his grooms, he will imagine her even affrighted with the sound of her own voice while she is speaking it.

“ Alas ! I am afraid they have awak’d,
 “ And ’tis not done ; the attempt, and not the deed,
 “ Confounds us—Hark !—I laid the daggers ready ;
 “ He could not miss them. Had he not resembled
 “ My father as he slept, I had done it !”

Courage assumes a firm and lofty tone, as in that speech of Don Sebastian.

“ Here

" Here satiate all your fury ;
 " Let fortune empty her whole quiver on me,
 " I have a soul that, like an ample shield,
 " Can take in all, and verge enough for more."

Pleasure dissolves into a luxurious, mild, tender, and joyous modulation ; as in the following lines in *Caius Marius* :

" Lavinia ! O there's musick in the name,
 " That softening me to infant tenderness,
 " Makes my heart spring like the first leaps of life."

Perplexity is different from all these ; grave, but not be-moaning, with an earnest, uniform tone of voice ; as in that celebrated speech of Hamlet :

" To be, or not to be ?——that is the question :
 " Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
 " The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
 " Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 " And, by opposing, end them. To die,—to sleep ;—
 " No more ;—and by a sleep to say we end
 " The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
 " That flesh is heir to ; 'tis a consummation
 " Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;—to sleep ;——
 " To sleep ! perchance to dream ; Ay, there's the rub ;
 " For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 " When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 " Must give us pause :—There's the respect
 " That makes calamity of so long life ;
 " For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 " The oppressors wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 " The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 " The insolence of office, and the spurns
 " That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 " When he himself might his *quietus* make
 " With a bare bodkin ? Who would fardles bear,
 " To groan and sweat under a weary life ;
 " But that the dread of something after death,—
 " The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
 " No traveller returns,—puzzles the will ;
 " And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 " Than fly to others that we know not of ?

" Thus

" Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;
 " And thus the native hue of resolution
 " Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ;
 " And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
 " With this regard, their currents turn awry,
 " And lose the name of action."

As all these varieties of voice are to be directed by the sense, so the action is to be directed by the voice, and with a beautiful propriety, as it were to enforce it. The arm, which by a strong figure Tully calls the Orator's weapon, is to be sometimes raised and extended, and the hand, by its motion, sometimes to lead, and sometimes to follow the words as they are uttered. The stamping of the foot too has its proper expression in contention, anger, or absolute command. But the face is the epitome of the whole man, and the eyes are as it were the epitome of the face; for which reason, he says, the best judges among the Romans were not extremely pleased, even with Roscius himself in his mask. No part of the body besides the face, is capable of as many changes as there are different emotions in the mind, and of expressing them all by those changes. Nor is this to be done without the accompaniment of the eyes; therefore Theophrastus called one, who barely rehearsed his speech with his eyes fixed, an *absent* Actor.

As the countenance admits of so great variety, it requires also great judgment to govern it. Not that the form of the face is to be shifted on every occasion, lest it turn to farce and buffoonery; but it is certain, that the eyes have a wonderful power of marking the emotions of the mind, sometimes by a steadfast look, sometimes by a careless one, now by a sudden regard, then by a joyful sparkling, as the sense of the words is diversified: for action is, as it were, the speech of the features and limbs, and must therefore conform itself always to the sentiments of the soul. And it may be observed, that in all which relates to the gesture, there is a wonderful force implanted by nature; since the vulgar, the unskilful, and even the most barbarous are chiefly affected by this. None are moved by the sound of words but those who understand the language: and the sense of many things is lost upon men of a dull apprehension: but action is a universal tongue; all men are subject to the same passions, and consequently

consequently know the same marks of them in others, by which they themselves express them.

There is another thing which my author does not think too minute to insist on, though it is purely mechanical; and that is the right pitching of the voice. On this occasion he tells the story of Gracchus, who employed a servant with a little ivory pipe to stand behind him and give him the right pitch, as often as he wandered too far from the proper modulation. Every voice, says Tully, has its particular medium and compass, and the sweetness of speech consists in leading it through all the variety of tones naturally, and without touching any extreme. Therefore, says he, leave the pipe at home, but carry the sense of the custom with you.

The RULES for DELIVERY prescribed in the foregoing pages, particularly as to action, are in various passages strongly inculcated and enforced by Shakespear; for instance, in the conduct which the mother of Coriolanus recommends to her son, on an occasion of addressing the citizens of Rome.

“ I pr’ythee now, my son,
 “ Go to them, with thy bonnet in thy hand,
 “ And thus far having stretch’d it, there be with them,
 “ Thy knee bussing the stones, (for in such business
 “ Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant
 “ More learned than the ears,) waving thy head,
 “ Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
 “ Now humble, as the ripest mulberry
 “ That will not hold the handling; or, say to them,
 “ Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
 “ Hast not the soft way, which thou dost confess,
 “ Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
 “ In asking their good loves: &c.”

Hamlet’s seasonable advice to the players, though necessarily concise, may likewise prove an instructive Lesson on Delivery, not unworthy the attention of our oratorical practitioners, whatever their department.

“ Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc’d it to you,
 “ trippingly on the tongue: But if you mouth it, as many
 “ of our Players do, I had as lieve the town-crier spoke
 “ my

“ my lines. And do not saw the air too much with your hand,
 “ thus, but use all gently ; for in the very torrent, tempest,
 “ and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must ac-
 “ quire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness.
 “ O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious, periwig-
 “ pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the
 “ ears of the groundlings ; who, for the most part, are capable of
 “ nothing, but inexplicable dumb shews, and noise : I would
 “ have such a fellow whipt for o’erdoing Termagant ; it out-
 “ herods Herod. Pray you avoid it. Be not too tame neither ;
 “ but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action
 “ to the word, the word to the action, with this special ob-
 “ servance, that you o’erstep not the modesty of nature ; for any
 “ thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose
 “ end, both at first and now, was and is, to hold, as ’twere, the
 “ mirror up to nature ; to shew virtue her own feature ; scorn
 “ her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his
 “ form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy of, tho’
 “ it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious
 “ grieve : the censure of which one, must, in your allowance,
 “ o’er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be Players
 “ that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly
 “ (not to speak it prophanely) that neither having the accent
 “ of christians, nor the gait of christian, pagan, nor man, have so
 “ strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature’s
 “ journey-men, had made men, and not made them well ; they
 “ imitated humanity so abominably. And let those, that play
 “ your Clowns speak no more than is set down for them ; for
 “ there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some
 “ quantity of barren spectators to laugh too ; though in the mean
 “ time, some necessary question of the Play be then to be confi-
 “ dered : That’s villainous ; and shews a most pitiful ambition
 “ in the fool that uses it.”

The following EPISTLES addressed to two young Divines, by
 Dr. Byrom,* of Manchester, notwithstanding the singularity of
 the style, seem written with so much good humour and good
 sense, and contain precepts as well as advice so much to the pur-
 pose,

* Author of the elegant pastoral ballad, *My Time, O, ye Muses*, &c.
 printed in the 8th Volume of the *Spectator* ; Inventor of the *Universal*
Short Hand ; F. R. S. and sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

pose, that I do not hesitate to insert them here, and recommend them to the serious perusal of every candidate for holy orders.

ADVICE TO PREACH SLOW.

BRETHREN, this comes to let you know
That I would have you to preach slow ;
To give the words of a discourse
Their proper time, and life, and force ;
To urge what you think fit to say,
In a sedate, pathetic way ;
Grave and deliberate, as 'tis fit
To comment upon holy writ.

Many a good sermon gives distaste,
By being spoke in too much haste ;
Which, had it been pronounc'd with leisure,
Would have been listen'd to with pleasure :
And thus the preacher often gains
His labour only for his pains ;
As (if you doubt it) may appear
From every Sunday in the year.

For how indeed can one expect
The best discourse should take effect,
Unless the maker thinks it worth
Some care and pains to set it forth ?
What ! does he think the pains, he took
To write it fairly in a book,
Will do the business ? not a bit—
It must be spoke as well as writ.

What is a sermon, good or bad,
If a man reads it like a lad ?
To hear some people, when they preach,
How they run o'er all parts of speech,
And neither raise a word, nor sink,
Our learned bishops, one wou'd think,
Had taken school-boys from the rod,
To make ambassadors of God.

So perfect is the Christian scheme,
He that from thence shall take his theme,
And time to have it understood,
His sermon cannot but be good :
If he will needs be preaching stuff,
No time indeed is short enough ;

E'en let him read it like a letter,
The sooner it is done, the better.

But for a man that has a head,
Like yours or mine, I'd like to have said,
That can upon occasion raise,
A just remark, a proper phrase;
For such a one to run along,
Tumbling the accents o'er his tongue;
Shows only that a man at once,
May be a scholar and a dunce.

In point of sermons, 'tis confess,
Our English Clergy make the best:
But this appears, we must confess,
Not from the *pulpit*, but the *press*:
They manage, with disjointed skill,
The matter well, the manner ill;
And, what seems paradox at first,
They write the best, and preach the worst.

Both excellencies would unite,
Wou'd they but speak as well as write,
The outward action being taught,
To shew the strength of inward thought:
Now, to do this, our short-hand school
Lays down this plain and general rule,
Take time enough—all other graces
Will soon fill up their proper places.

ON PREACHING EXTEMPORE.

THE hint I gave, some time ago,
Brethren, about your preaching slow,
You took it seems; and thereupon
Could make two sermons out of one:
Now this regard to former lines,
Paid so successfully, inclines
To send advice the second part:
Try if you cannot preach by heart—

Be not alarm'd, as if regard
To this would prove so very hard;

The first admonishment you fear'd
 Would so turn out, 'till it appear'd
 That custom, only, made to seem
 So difficult in your esteem,
 What, upon trial, now procures
 Your hearers ease, and also yours.

Do but consider how the case
 Now stands in fact, in every place,
 All Christendom, almost, around,
 Except on our reformed ground:
 The greatest part, untaught to brook
 A preacher's reading from a book,
 Would scarce advance within his reach,
 Or, then, acknowledge him to preach.

Long after preaching first began,
 How unconceiv'd a reading plan!
 The rise of which, whatever date
 May be assign'd to it, is late:
 From all antiquity remote
 The manuscriptal reading rote:
 No need, no reason prompted, then,
 The *pulpit* to consult the *pen*.

However well prepar'd before,
 By pondering, or by writing o'er
 What he should say, still it was SAID
 By him that preach'd; it was not READ:
 Could ancient memory, then, better
 Forbear the poring o'er the letter,
 Brethren, than yours? if you'll but try,
 That fact I'll venture to deny.

Moderns, of late, give proofs enob,
 (Too many, as it seems to you)
 That matters of religious kind,
 Stor'd up within the thoughtful mind,
 With any care and caution stor'd,
 Sufficient utterance afford,
 To tell an audience what they think,
 Without the help of pen and ink.

How apt to think too, is the throng,
 A *preacher* short, a *reader* long!
 Claiming, itself, to be the book
 That should attract a pastor's look:

If you lament a careless age
Averse to hear the pulpit page,
Speak from *within*, not from without,
And heart to heart will turn about.

Try it ; and if you can't succeed,
'Twill then be right for you to read ;
Altho' the heart, if that's your choice,
Must still accompany the voice ;
And tho' you should succeed, and take
The hint, you must not, merely, make
Preaching *extempore* the view,
But EX ÆTERNITATE too,

T O . A F R I E N D ,

ON CLERGYMEN PREACHING POLITICS.

INDEED, *Sir Peter*, I could wish, I own,
That parsons would let *politics* alone ;
Plead, if they will, the customary plea,
For such like talk, when o'er a dish of tea ;
But when they tease us with it from the pulpit,
I own, *Sir Peter*, that I cannot gulp it.

If on their rules a *Justice* should intrench,
And preach, suppose, a sermon, from the bench,
Would you not think your brother magistrate
Was touch'd a little in his hinder pate ?
Now which is worse, *Sir Peter*, on the total,
The *Lay Vagary*, or the *Sacerdotal* ?

In ancient times, when preachers preach'd indeed
Their sermons, ere the Learned learnt to read,
Another spirit, and another life,
Shut the church doors against all party strife :
Since then, how often heard, from sacred rostrums,
The lifeless din of *Whig* and *Tory nostrums* !

'Tis wrong, *Sir Peter*, I insist upon't ;
To common sense 'tis plainly an affront :
The parson leaves the *Christian* in the lurch,
Whene'er he brings his *politics* to church ;
His cant, on either side, if he calls preaching,
The man's wrong-headed, and his brains want bleaching.

Recall

Recall the time from conquering *William's* reign;
 And guess the fruits of such a preaching vein:
 How oft its nonsense must have veer'd about,
 Just as the politics were in, or out:
 The pulpit govern'd by no gospel *data*;
 But new success still mending old *errata*.

Were I a king (God bless me) I should hate
 My chaplains meddling with affairs of state;
 Nor would my subjects, I should think, be fond,
 Whenever theirs the *Bible* went beyond;
 How well, methinks, we both should live together,
 If these good folks would keep within their tether!

ON PREJUDICE.

I SHALL close this part of the Work with strictures on the subject of prejudice, by way of anticipation against surprise at a freedom I may be thought to have taken with common and received opinions; as well as because prejudice is the greatest obstruction to real knowledge that ever spread a veil over it. The first step to virtue, say moralists, is to divest ourselves of vice: and, by parity of reasoning, the leading effort to adorn the mind is to purge it of prejudice, which, like slime, muddles the transparent fountain of truth.

The consequences of prejudice would not be of such moment were they confined to opinion; but daily observation teaches that the practice of men is under the immediate and powerful direction of its influence, and often distorted from the paths of rectitude by obsequious attention to its dictates. The ghosts of thousands, sent untimely to their graves, rise up in judgment against it.

In points of moment prejudices are followed by the worst of consequences to peace and harmony. Few are satisfied with being alone under the tyranny of false opinions, without endeavouring to enslave others and confine them with the same shackles themselves have submitted to wear. Men look with envy and hatred on the retainers to different sentiments, and consider their dissent from them as a reproach, and a contempt to their judgment and persons. Hence arise, especially in the political world, bickerings and animosity, rancour and bloodshed, with every evil that the malice of a little mind can invent.

From

From individuals the rage extends to numerous parties, and whole communities are forced, by dint of tyranny, to enlist in the cause. It is a diverting spectacle to see opposite sets of two-legged wolves, at a country election, foaming and worrying one another, they know not why, in defence of candidates, who are regaled by their simplicity, and purpose to sell them at the earliest market.

True friendship and harmony can subsist only where there is nearly a uniformity of opinions; and uniformity of opinion cannot safely be constructed on any other basis than that of general truths, which continue invariably the same.

Prejudice and error, it must be owned, have united companions in a cause, and been productive of hearty friendship, on some occasions, equally with truth itself; but they are uncertain foundations to trust to, perpetually changing as tempers change. The vulgar, who are confined by the strongest fetters of prejudice, are eternally jarring, in consequence of their blindness, which suffers them to disquiet one another, in obedience to every transport of passion. Men, whose understandings are refined, on the other hand, happily coincide, by a certain sympathy, in their opinions, and live in harmony. The general views they have of things supersede particular errors, which are the seeds of dissension, and conjointly operate to universal peace.

I would not have it supposed I mean to say, that all men of sense agree in every particular. Such a harmony is utterly incompatible with human nature, and would terminate in a general stagnation. Of the millions that inhabit our globe, there are not any two who completely resemble each other; nor should we wish for such a universality. A variety of views and objects, a variety of offices and occupations, a variety of odours and favours, a variety of pleasures and amusements, call for a variety of tastes, tempers, and choices, or the bounty of Nature is lost. Must the sprightly Mira pine for a lover because Eugenius affects a melting maid? or must the languishing Delia die unblest because Florio is taken with livelier attractions? The queen of beauty answers, No: her decree is, that Maria should be happy in the possession of Florio, and Delia be the choice of her Eugenius: that both the pairs should live in harmony as friends, and differ only about the object of their love.

Reason will not evince that what is agreeable to the palate of one, must likewise please the taste of another. The pores and particles of our organs are variously disposed and constructed,
and

and produce not in every one the same flavour: the tempers of men are different, and are differently affected by objects in themselves the same. Brutus might sacrifice a bosom-friend to the public, and assassinate Cæsar; while another, warmed with the feelings of a friend, could not, in the precarious hope of serving his country, resist the impulses of private affection. We may pardon, nay, even applaud both for their virtues, as much as we should condemn them if they concurred in the schemes of ambition abstracted from the ties of friendship. Primary and leading truths are not subject to variation, in polished minds, as dependent on eternal and unalterable principles. To injure another without a cause cannot be justified by the most subtle sophistry, or the most eloquent harangue. Reason condemns it on certain *data*, admitted by every one exempt from prejudice. And if we allow, with Pope, that there are but few *certain truths* in the world, we cannot so far vindicate Pyrrhonism, as to grant that there are none at all.

Prejudice is the more dangerous, as it bears the semblance of truth, bringing just conclusions from false premises, and is on that account with more difficulty avoided. An open foe is less to be dreaded than a secret flattering enemy, because we are aware of him: and it may even be questioned if the votaries of prejudice are not more convinced of the reality of those absurdities they entertain, than the most rational philosopher is of any general truth he believes. Narrow minds are ever obstinate in their opinions: clear understandings are more diffident in deciding, better acquainted with the apish chicanery of error, and more open to conviction when afforded them.

There is no bound set to this ape of truth. To what lengths has not prejudice led men? Absurdities, that brutes would be shocked at, have been believed by men. Onions and crocodiles have been adored as gods. The most intolerable nonsense of the most extravagant genius has been, by the power of prejudice, received with the honours of truth, and propagated.

When we see a lunatic, with all his wildness about him, we are naturally led to afford him our pity. The disease of mind he labours under is regarded as one of the greatest evils that can befall a human being: the tenderest concern is expressed in endeavours to recal his fugitive senses, and physical aid is applied to for relief. But prejudice, which is a partial lunacy, is nursed and cherished. No pity is afforded to this species of insanity;

no cure is sought for one agitated by this demon of absurdity: he is not esteemed a demoniac, though his madness extends to the subversion of unity, friendship, and every blessing in life.

If we nicely examine the matter, we shall find that the greater part of received notions are not the result of reflection, but that they are derived by patrimonial inheritance. Prejudices descend, like estates, from father to son; and the latter seems to think this part of his inheritance a necessary article of his father's will, which must not be reversed, on pain of his losing the other legacies included in the testament.

Not that it is proper for every one to set himself up for a thinker, in opposition to wiser heads, or on points he is not a judge of. It is no more the business of some to make their own opinions than it is to make their own cloaths: all are not fit for thinkers, and all are not fit for taylor's. A milkmaid that would wrangle with Newton about the origin of colours, would do well to dispose of her wares: Though the liquid she deals in is always white, it will not be expected of her to account for this accidental quality, as philosophers themselves have disputed whether the rays of light are more reflected from substances of large, or of small pores; from the surfaces, or from the vacuities of matter.

I would only urge, as many a simple man has done before me, that we should not embrace a sentiment for sterling because our grandmothers did so, when indisputable arguments are brought to contradict it. Many a man, to whom Nature has imparted a bountiful share of good sense, has had that blessing miserably lost on him, by servilely adhering to the dogmas of others, less distinguished for understanding than himself. To have an opinion backed by another is unquestionably one argument that may be alledged in favour of that opinion; but before it be set down for sterling, by a man of moderate discernment, it ought to be examined on principles of reason, particularly if controverted. Every absurdity of heathen mythology, every deceit of unhallowed superstition, but for reflection, had been received at this day, and acknowledged for divine.

Prejudices are implanted in the tender minds of youth as early as they are capable of ideas. When under the care of their nurses, they are taught to believe in ghosts, hobgoblins, and witches: and when that stage of life is succeeded by the next, they are instructed to despise and hate the members of a different communion, and the natives of a different country. Thus prejudice being sucked in, as it were, with their mother's milk, it

is not a subject of wonder that it grows up with them. A boy, that is strongly possessed of the notion of sprites and apparitions, will dread the dark, in spite of his reason, when grown a man.

As one idea of genuine knowledge suggests another, so one false conception is engendered from the spawn of another. Erroneous maxims in one point are proper foundations for a million more. The concatenation of our reasonings may as aptly be rendered subservient to the purposes of error, as become steps to sublimer truths. False notions are, then, to be avoided with redoubled precaution for the train of absurdities, which (inseparable companions as Bardolph, Nim, and Pistol,) closely pursue each others heels. It is more prudent to combat a single foe, than, by losing time, to allow him opportunity to convene a host to his assistance.

The meanness of prejudice, were there no evils arising from it, should lead to avoid it. Every narrow notion, a man of little mind betrays to a person of sense, is regarded by the latter as the boundary of his understanding, planted there by his nigardly Genius, and purchases his contempt; or else his pity, which is nearly allied to contempt. His pride ought, in such a case, to receive an alarm, and excite to a removal of the cause of his disgrace. I know not whether the character of a fool is not more disliked than that of a knave, through the iniquity of the times; however the latter, from numberless considerations, should meet the scorn.

Reflections like these are obvious to the lowest capacity. No one in his senses will go about to contradict what has been here asserted, and yet all of us, in some instances or other, have need of such advice. The cap will fit the greater part of the world; but few will own and wear it; Few are found so candid. This very blind partiality to ourselves is the grand prejudice that rivets and confirms all our other prejudices: till men are persuaded that they can be in the wrong, they never will be at the pains of informing themselves in what they err. Every one is to himself a world, a universal mind, and a judge supreme, with whom resides the last appeal; and at the tribunal of each individual's opinion must all other men, and their actions, fall prostrate, to receive their sentence. We all propose ourselves as patterns and teachers, but refuse to submit to the example or judgment of any one: we all, like dictators, assume sovereignty in decision, and in private indulge the pride, vanity, and arrogance, which are displayed in a more public manner by an AUTHOR.

ON THE
SUPPOSED EXCELLENCE

OF THE

LEARNED LANGUAGES, IN THE ARTICLE OF BREVITY
OR CONCISENESS,

COMPARED WITH THE *MODERN ENGLISH*.

I HAVE so often heard the learned languages for brevity and terseness of expression preferred to our own, that I imagine a concise review of the real state of the question, as a matter of curiosity at least, will not be altogether uninteresting. It is roundly asserted that no original work, for instance the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*, can be rendered into English without a degree of circumlocution, diffuseness, or prolixity; consequently that the translations, requiring a greater latitude of expression than the works in their native dress, cannot be so compact; but will necessarily run to a greater extent than in either of the learned tongues. This, indeed is an opinion pretty generally received; but I conceive an opinion, like many others, too implicitly admitted and adopted without sufficient examination; nay, upon a fair and impartial scrutiny, I persuade myself, it will appear that the direct contrary is the fact: the English in point of brevity or conciseness, has considerably the advantage of both the Latin and Greek. I rest my assertion, not on straggling phrases, or particular passages partially selected, which may be picked up in all languages, but on the versions of those works, already in the hands of the public, compared with the originals at large. It is objected to our language that it abounds in monosyllables, a defect as it is called with which the learned languages are not chargeable, being chiefly composed of polysyllables; an unlucky argument on the footing of brevity: for if I can express in

one syllable what will cost the Latins or Greeks two, three, or perhaps more, I certainly do it at a less expence of time and breath, which is what in this case is implied by brevity or conciseness; but this is an argument by the bye, of which I shall not take the advantage. Let Homer and Virgil, Pope, Cowper, Dryden, Warton, and Pitt, not to mention others, for the honour of their respective tongues, be summoned to appear; we cannot have better evidence.

In cases depending on calculation and admeasurement, it is proper in the first place to fix upon some common and settled standard; otherwise it would be impossible to attain a just and precise idea of the quantum, or assign to each its relative proportion. In the present case the mere number of lines, or what is more in our favour, the mere number of syllables, is inadequate to the purpose; for that implies an equality, which as is known to the commonest reader, does not exist; we must rather refer to the metre; that, in the language of Prosodians, is resolvable into quantity, or the time taken up in pronouncing, and luckily this affords a criterion against which there can be no possible objection. 'Tis true the ancient and modern verses are not of the same extent or construction, on this chiefly hitches the argument; but in some respects they agree, and admit of an easy comparison. Both are composed of feet.

A foot in poetry, analogous to a bar in music, is a combination of two or three syllables, making certain impressions on the ear at stated and regular intervals; a limited succession of which constitutes verse, and these are of divers descriptions. The hexameter or heroic verse of the ancients, consists of six feet, equal as to time, *i. e.* to four short quantities, though indifferently of two or three syllables. The English heroic verse extends but to five feet, of three short quantities, equivalent to, or wholly iambic, which is the prevailing, and only foot, which of itself constitutes an English heroic verse; a position which the following lines will serve sufficiently to illustrate, and as they are marked, must be obvious to inspection; The feet are separately distinguished by a short perpendicular line passed between them; and, for the use of such readers as may not be very conversant in matters of this nature, the quantity of the syllables, of which the feet are severally composed, is likewise pointed out: a small horizontal stroke, - denotes the syllable over which it takes place to be long; the short syllables are distinguished

distinguished by a little curve turned upwards *◡* ; the marks generally used by Profodians: The syllables purely accented have likewise their peculiar mark.

And mánŷ | ǎn ámö | rous, mánŷ | ǎ húmö | rous lāy, |
Which mánŷ | ǎ bārd | hǎd cháunt | ěd mánŷ | ǎ Dāy ; |
Tō wāke | thě sōul | by ten' | dēr strōkes | ǒf ārt |
Tō rāise | thě gē | nūs ǎnd | tō men'd | thě heārt |

There are no less than three feet specifically different, besides a two fold variety of the same foot, employed in the structure of these four verses ; yet the verses are all of the same class, purely heroic, consisting each of five feet, however different in number of syllables, equivalent to five of the pure iambic kind.* The first and second verse chiefly trisyllabic, terminated by an iambic ; the third all iambic, and the last all but one, which is a tribrach ; exhibiting a variety, for which it would be difficult to produce a parallel in a like number of lines equally circumstanced through the whole range of antiquity. It may not be amiss here farther to observe, that the Greek and Roman numbers depend wholly on quantity, inseparably annexed to the mechanism of their syllables. We also have the use of quantity, not indeed mechanically restricted to the casual arrangement of letters and syllables, but chiefly resulting from emphasis and the relative importance of the sense, as may be seen in the verses before cited ; but the grand principle on which our metre depends is Accent, which in regulating the movement, as may also be perceived in the foregoing verses, does the office of quantity, and gives us an advantage over the ancients, for which they had nothing to compensate.

These points being previously established, which though a very slight and cursory view of the subject, seemed necessary in aid of our more immediate enquiry ; whether in fact the ancient tongues have the advantage of our modern English in the article of brevity or conciseness ? we have so far cleared the way and with more certainty can proceed to a conclusion.

A line

* The trisyllabic foot used in our Heroic Verse does not alter or break in upon the time ; for the three Syllables, by nature short, and the pure Iambic of two Syllables, one short and the other long, are precisely equal, or musically speaking a Bar of three notes all Quavers and a Bar consisting of a Quaver and a Crotchet, tho' but of two, are perfectly equivalent.

A line from the ancients with a corresponding one in English will suffice as examples of the measure.

armă vī | rūmqŭē cā | nō Trō | jæ quī | prīmŭs āb | ōrīs ||
arms ānd | thē man' | I ſing' | whō fir'ſt | frōm Trōy

These lines are not partially selected, but indifferently taken; both are verse, heroics in their kind, according to the genius of their language; and it is observable, in the very first instance, the English is five syllables shorter than the Latin, of which it is a literal translation; it might be farther observed, the Latin is partly elliptical, wanting the nominative case *Ego*, which would add two syllables more, to make it completely grammar; whereas the English requires no addition, expressed or understood, being in that respect perfectly complete; and three of its five feet are here formed by accent.

Profodians agree that a long syllable or quantity is equal to two short; and by the short, as a standard unexceptionably convenient, the measure is computed. From this view it is manifest, that the ancient heroic verse extends to twenty-four short times, syllables or quantities, name them as you will; the English is comprised in fifteen, however modified or combined in forming the different feet, which constitute heroic verse. It is by no means requisite to take into consideration the various combinations or successive arrangement of the feet, which is, with few limitations, pretty much at the discretion of the poet; for in this case the reasoning that holds of one applies to all. But to form a more distinct and perfect idea of the measure, let us view it divested of words, naked as it were, and in the abstract, we need go no farther than the verses before us,

Ancient Heroic.

- . . . | - . . . | - - | - - | - . . . | - - || 6 feet.

Modern Heroic.

- . | . ' | . ' | . ' | . - || 5 feet.

To those, any way conversant in music, it may be rendered still more obvious, and easy of comprehension, by considering the feet, in a way already noted, as analogous to bars; long syllables as crotchets, and the short, quavers; crotchets and quavers being precisely in the same proportion as the long and short quantities of profodians; one crotchet being equal to two quavers; and thus the double bar or strain of the musicians answers to what we call a verse,

a verse, whether of ancient or modern structure. The Hexameter or ancient heroic verse, equivalent to a strain of six bars, common time, *i. e.* each of two crotchets, or four quavers, however modulated, equal upon the whole to twenty-four quavers; the modern or English heroic, includes but five bars, triple time, of one crotchet and a quaver, or three quavers each, counting together no more than fifteen. Common time, and triple time, are terms purely technical, without any reference to swiftness or slowness, or specific difference in real executive time, introduced to mark and regulate the movement. The ancients well understood the nature of feet in poetry; but in the sister art, knew no such distinction: bars in music, as well as stops in writing, are of modern invention; the ancient music is without them. Now supposing two pieces of music, with or without words, composed agreeably to the premises, in the proportion of twenty-four to fifteen, and, to avoid cavil, the performance regulated by a chronometer, every note of similar description in the one, of the same absolute value as in the other, it would be an affront to common sense, to say on the aggregate, which would be the shortest. It is level to the commonest capacity. Music and poetry, which comprise the whole of delivery, are in this respect governed by one and the same law; this is the common scale, and as I conceive, the only one, with propriety, we can refer to, in determining the question before us, which presently I mean to apply.

It may be said, and who can dispute it? of the true pronunciation of Latin and Greek we have no competent judges; to their particular mode of articulating certain letters, either separately or in combination, we are utterly strangers; of their Rythmus, a matter, as was before observed, wholly mechanical, we are perfectly masters. Homer or Virgil, were they to arise from the grave, and hear an Englishman read their works, would not probably in his mode of pronunciation recognize their own language; but in the time of pronunciation, which, on musical principles, is governed by the rythmus, our present object, he would make no material encroachment. We, in general, pronounce the ancient languages, *par pro pari*, as we pronounce our own; and in English, the grand law of syllabication is so precise and unequivocal, that an accurate speaker, even were he striving, can hardly transgress. The grand law of distinct utterance, I speak not of idiomatic, or partial differences, is Brevity; which includes two general rules:

1. Pro-

1. Pronounce every short syllable or quantity in the shortest possible time, consistent with distinct articulation, which is in all cases to be understood ; as, cap, pet, kit, top, put.

2. Pronounce every long syllable in the shortest possible time, dwelling on it the shortest possible time, to mark its peculiar nature ; as, cape, pefe, kite, tope, pute.

Now the shortest possible time requisite to distinct articulation, and the shortest possible time in dwelling on a sound, so articulated, to mark its differential character, must necessarily be equal, and cannot be otherwise, even in conception, *i. e.* one long syllable or quantity is equal to two short, and those of a fixed and determinate measure ; an advantage wanting to music ; for, in that fascinating art, which indeed speaks a universal language, the notes as to time, in every other respect perfect, are merely relative, and as such, subject to adventitious variation. For the same passage, the same melody, may be performed, quick or slow, as well as soft or loud, still preserving its identity, as humour or conceits shall govern. In speech the case is otherwise ; the measure of time is absolute, I mean simply as to enunciation ; it is not governed by humour or caprice ; all men, free from organical defects, like all harpsichords, are upon a par as to mere articulation, uttering the sound in the moment of impulse ; though in impassioned discourse, and for the sake of expression, they may indulge their feelings, and deviate a little into an energetic swell, or plaintive whine ; yet those are but occasional exceptions, of no force against the general rule ; which is, if I may so express it, an instinct of nature, and the uniform practice of every accurate speaker. Nor in that reprehensible volubility of speech observable in some, is the case altered ; their quickness, which is always attended with palpable indistinctness, proceeds from the rapid succession of syllables, and the total neglect of pauses or stops, not to any abridgment of the time inseparable from distinct articulation ; for that is impossible. Distinct or indistinct they necessarily must be ; there is no medium. Those who from vicious imitation, disgraceful indolence, or affectation equally disgraceful ; confirmed evil habits, self-sufficiency, or whatever cause natural or acquired, labour under impediments of speech ; clutter syllables awkwardly together, substitute one letter for another, mutilate syllables, suppressing some letters entirely, mince or mangle their words, misplace or multiply and sleep upon the accents, babble they may, but never can deserve precedence in the honourable class of speakers.

The

The metrical or musical Principle, which I have endeavoured to explain, perfectly coinciding with the genius of our Tongue, is in a still more peculiar sense adapted to the language of the ancients; for 'tis probable their common way of speaking was in a sort of Chant or Recitative, somewhat analogous to the Chant of our Cathedral Service, or the Recitative of modern Operas, as may be collected from the story of Gracchus's Pitch Pipe, (p. 182,) and the Plot or stage Regulation uniformly prefixed to Terence's Comedies. We there find, as an indispensable property, a musical accompaniment of two Flutes constantly appointed, which continued playing in support of the Speakers the whole time of the Piece; a practice which has greatly puzzled the Critics, and cannot well be reconciled on any other principle but that of their commonly speaking in a sort of Chant or Recitative. We likewise read that the Barbarians took great delight in listening to the harangues of the Ancient Orators, though

H O M E R.

Greek Hexameter.	English Heroics.	Pope's Transl.	Differ. shorter.	Cowper's Transl.	Differ. shorter.
1 Iliad 611	equivalent to 977:3	781	by 196:3	752	by 225:3
2 877	1403:1	1071	332:1	1075	328:1
3 461	737:3	577	160:3	540	197:3
4 544	870:2	637	233:2	644	226:2
5 909	1454:2	1121	333:2	1083	371:2
6 529	846:2	679	167:2	645	201:2
7 482	771:1	580	191:1	570	201:1
8 561	897:3	708	189:3	655	242:3
9 709	1134:2	837	297:2	884	250:2
10 579	926:2	680	246:2	683	243:2
11 847	1355:1	985	370:1	1034	321:1
12 471	753:3	562	191:3	573	180:3
13 837	1339:1	1060	279:1	1017	322:1
14 522	835:1	618	217:1	632	203:1
15 746	1193:3	909	284:3	903	290:3
16 867	1387:1	1049	338:1	1062	325:1
17 761	1217:3	854	363:3	921	296:3
18 616	985:3	712	273:3	765	220:3
19 424	678:2	471	207:2	518	160:2
20 503	804:4	590	214:4	620	184:4
21 611	977:3	724	253:3	705	272:3
22 515	824:2	663	161:2	602	222:2
23 897	1435:1	1063	372:1	1106	329:1
24 804	1286:2	1016	270:2	1017	275:2
Tot Gr. 15683 equal to Eng 25092:4		18947	6145:4	19000	6092:4

though they knew not a word of what was said, engaged solely by the modulation of their accents: this still farther confirms our hypothesis. It has been shewn that the ancient and modern metre is as 15 to 24; consequently their compositions will be inversely in the like proportion; *i. e.* 24 lines of ours are precisely equal to 15 of theirs: In other words, a Poem of 1500 lines in either of the learned tongues comprised in an English Translation of 2400 lines, Rhyme or blank Verse, is numerically at Par, By this Scale the annexed Tables were constructed . . p. 199, &c. The 1st column exhibits the Books of the Iliad, &c. with the number of lines each, as in the original. The next column shews to a fraction, the Number of English Heroics exactly corresponding. To this succeeds the actual Number of Lines in Pope's Translation, with the complement, or difference short of the Limitation; and lastly, on the same ground, follows Cowper's. By which at one view may be seen, that, on any single Book, or the whole upon an average, *ceteris paribus*,

Greek Hexameter.	English Heroics.	Pope's Transl.	Differ. shorter.	Cowper's Transl.	Differ. shorter.
1 Odyss. 444 equivalent to	710:2	558 by	152:2	564 by	146:2
2 434	694:2	475	219:2	553	141:2
3 497	795:1	630	165:1	624	171:1
4 847	1355:1	1108	247:1	1028	327:1
5 493	788:4	637	151:4	598	190:4
6 331	529:3	394	135:3	409	120:3
7 347	555:1	438	117:1	434	121:1
8 586	937:3	631	306:3	720	217:3
9 566	905:3	659	246:3	667	238:3
10 574	918:2	690	228:2	698	220:2
11 639	1022:2	794	228:2	781	241:2
12 453	724:4	538	186:4	531	193:4
13 440	704:0	511	193:0	531	173:0
14 533	852:4	602	250:4	650	204:4
15 556	889:3	598	291:3	675	214:0
16 481	769:3	501	268:3	567	202:3
17 606	969:3	688	281:3	729	240:3
18 427	683:1	473	210:1	534	149:1
19 604	966:2	704	262:2	749	217:2
20 394	630:2	469	161:2	476	154:2
21 434	694:2	478	216:2	520	174:2
22 501	801:3	538	263:3	580	221:3
23 372	595:1	399	196:1	448	147:1
24 547	875:1	631	244:1	638	237:1
Tot. Gr. 12106	Eng. 19369.3	14144	5225:3	14704	4665:3

a reserve partly necessary to guard against cavil, the balance in point of Brevity or Conciseness is largely, unequivocally, and decisively in favour of the Moderns. Q. E. D.

The

V I R G I L.

Latin Hexameter.	English Heroics.	Dryden. Transl. shorter	Warton. Transl. shorter
1 Eclogue 84 equivalent to	134:2	112 by 22:2	106 by 28:2
2 73	116:4	108 8:4	92 24:4
3 111	177:3	172 5:3	160 17:3
4 63	100:4	78 22:4	72 28:4
5 90	144:	143 1:	104 40:
6 86	137:3	125 12:3	110 27:3
7 70	112:	100 12:	72 40:
8 109	174:2	160 14:2	144 30:2
9 67	107:1	95 12:1	82 25:1
10 77	123:1	114 9:1	104 19:1
Tot. Ecl. 830 equivalent to	1328:0	1207 121:0	1046 282:0
1 Georgic 514	822:2	Dryden. 693 129:2	Warton. 601 221:2
2 542	867:1	794 73:1	666 201:1
3 566	905:3	844 61:3	684 221:3
4 566	905:3	818 87:3	656 249:3
Tot. Geo. 2188 equivalent to	3500:4	3149 351:4	2607 893:4
1 Æneid 756	1209:3	Dryden. 1065 144:3	Pitt. 1026 183:3
2 804	1286:2	1094 192:2	1084 202:2
3 718	1148:4	944 204:4	979 169:4
4 705	1128:	1010 118:	1017 111:
5 871	1393:3	1136 257:3	1131 262:3
6 901	1441:3	1247 194:3	1286 155:3
7 817	1307:1	1113 194:1	1050 257:1
8 731	1169:3	977 192:3	997 172:3
9 818	1308:4	1106 202:4	1111 197:4
10 908	1452:4	1313 139:4	1293 159:4
11 915	1464:	1318 146:	1276 188:
12 952	1523:1	1377 146:1	1348 175:1
Total Æn. 9896 equivalent to	15833:3	13700 2133:3	13598 2235:3

	<i>Hexameters.</i>	<i>Heroics.</i>	<i>feet.</i>
The Greek Iliad contains	15683	equal to	25092 : 4
Pope's Translation in Rhyme, contains but	18947	:	6 verses.

Shorter than the original by - 6145 : 4 do.

Which, to give a more adequate idea of the difference, is 731 lines more than all Thomson's Seasons.

Cowper has taken 19,000 lines in blank verse, which is also shorter than the original, by 6092 lines and 4 feet. Both versions, have very justly their admirers; but it is worthy of remark, notwithstanding all the boasted advantages of blank verse, and all the lamented difficulties and restraints to which the man of rhyme is subject, Pope on the scale of brevity, has the advantage of his rival. The same, in a yet higher degree, will be seen, on comparing their versions of the Odyssey. The original contains 12,106 Hexameters, which precisely covers 19,369 English Heroics and 3 feet, to a fraction; Pope's Rhyme 14,144, which is 5225:3 within the limits: Cowper's Blank Verse 14,704, *i. e.* 4665:3 more concise than the Greek, yet longer by 560 lines than Pope's Translation, which proportioned to the original, is nearly on a par with his Version of the Iliad.

To take the question up in another light: suppose the whole Iliad in Greek, and Pope's Translation severally set to music, limiting the bars to the metre, and the number of notes in each bar to the number of syllables in the corresponding poetic foot, both in the original and translation respectively; a crotchet to a syllable of a long quantity, and to the short, a quaver; every note, crotchet for crotchet, and quaver for quaver, mutually telling as its fellow. Homer in his own tongue would put the composer to the expence of 92,187 quavers, or 30,729 bars, of three quavers to a bar, more than his translator: an excess that would cost an expert bow-hand nine hours, sans intermission, to get over. And supposing him from twelve years of age, employed every day, Sundays included at the same rate, till sixty, he must spend no less than eighteen solid years... fiddling!!! What in a similar predicament would become of your unfortunate declaimer, who would not only have grammatic stops and rhetoric pauses, but also the intercallery graces of hum and haw to impede him?

Warren and Pitt's Virgil, Eclogues, Georgics and the Æneid, taken in the aggregate, is 805 lines or verses shorter than Dryden's, which

which nevertheless on our scale of adjustment, is 2606 verses and two feet more concise than the original, though more diffuse than Pope's Homer, which may be as well owing to the peculiar manner of the different writers as to the languages, or both. But we have a translation of Virgil extant in English, line for line, which on the same scale, in the inverse ratio of 24 to 15, is to the gross amount of 4842 verses more concise than the Roman; which converted into Hudibrastics would nearly equal the whole of Butler's chivalrous Poem of that name. Some over-hasty judges in their partiality for Virgil, and many more would-be-thought judges over-partial to themselves, may look upon a version so circumstanced with contempt; this is not a competition of writers but of languages, confined to a particular point; if with a corps of 8072 light infantry, for on the scale of equalization to no more does that translation amount, the genius of the English tongue can keep the field against the genius of the Latin, at the head of 12,914 select troops, though the latter make the more gaudy appearance, our English battalions must be by so much the more compact than their opponents, and individually surpass them in capacity and strength. The faults which may possibly be objected to our translator of that admirable Poet, cannot by the fondest advocate for Latinity, be urged against Milton, who for the greatness of his subject, sublimity and copiousness of invention, and the aptitude, strength and harmony of his numbers, is by no writer surpassed. The Latin version of Paradise Lost, by Mr. Dobson, Fellow of New-College, Oxford, is incontrovertibly a performance of classical excellence, yet with all the advantages of that language, it extends to a greater number of lines than the English; on the whole, allowing for the greater latitude of the Hexameter, 6486 Miltonic verses; which, to the honour of English conciseness, admitting Milton to have understood and fully expressed his own meaning, is clearly a superfluity, in the language of Ovid, *Vox et preterea nihil.*

Dobson's Latin Version is as close as the idioms of the languages will well admit, yet, incredible as it may seem, the excess incurred, is little, if any thing, short of all the rest of our Author's original Poems in English, put together. Paradise Regained, Samson Agonistes, Comus, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Arcades and Lycidas contain 5482 verses, and on a cursory view, his other Poems on several occasions, I think, would scarcely count 1004; sum total, 6486 verses; the precise difference already mentioned, by which the Latin metre exceeds the English of Paradise

Paradise Lost. If this is not sufficiently explicit, read them by a stop-watch, the Latin will take up by so much a longer time in pronouncing ; set them severally to music, the Latin will require a proportionally longer time in performance ; write them down separately, the Latin in the same character will cover more paper, and so of the rest. If there be any other way of ascertaining the comparative length or conciseness of languages, in contradiction to what I have attempted, I am out in my arithmetic, and begging the courteous Reader's pardon, must console myself with the amusement it has afforded me in my lonely hours for my pains.

Be it however still remembered, I am not entering into the merits of composition, or presuming to dictate in matters of taste. *De Gustibus non est disputandum.* But with perhaps somewhat more of attention, and I trust, a laudable predilection for native habits and our mother tongue, "in what she counsels and in what excels," I am combating a popular error, reducible to a numeral process, which though under my own eye, may not be wholly faultless, and is now submitted to correction.

THE REVEREND MR. SPENCE,
ON SCHOOL EDUCATION.

I HAVE long, (says Mr. SPENCE, in his *POLYMETIS*) suspected, that the method of education, which is followed now, and has been followed for so many ages, in our schools, is chiefly founded on a mistake. What I have to say on this head, may seem perhaps very conjectural to you ; however I will give it you, such as it is. The school education among the Romans of old, aimed no farther than at two languages ; and each of those a *living* language. Their own ; for conversation, for reading, and for speaking in public : And Greek, that of their nearest neighbours ; and of neighbours too, *who had been for some time in the chief possession of the arts and sciences.* In teaching their own language the Romans made use chiefly of their poets ; and with very good reason : for the thing to be taught at first was the right pronunciation ; and how could they fix the proper tones of the words, and the true quantities of their syllables, but from the works of their poets ? When the Romans had advanced their conquests pretty far in our island,

island, our ancestors, (wiser, perhaps, in this than we may be) fell with a surprising readiness into the customs of the conquerors; studied their language; and, probably adopted their method of school education: for they had scarcely before any common schools of their own. It might be right enough then to comply with the politics of AGRICOLA; and to be as ready to learn the customs of the Romans, as they were to teach them: And, indeed, while the Roman Dominion lasted here, the most prudent of the old Britons were probably the most earnest students of their times. It was then politic to study Latin and Greek; Latin, as necessary to enable them to converse with their masters; and Greek, as a language, so much in vogue with the same. Without the former, at least, they could not make their court to the conquerors; nor get themselves advanced to any post of credit in their own country. It was this, I imagine, which made the Roman method of education take so much among us: And, the introducing, and following of it for some time, was as prudent as it was necessary. But after the Romans found it not worth the while to maintain their conquests in this island, and at last quite deserted it, the Britons of that age might be as wrong in continuing their method of education, as those of the former were in receiving it. However, as it was then in possession, and had been for three centuries, it seems to have been continued without considering that there were not the same reasons for it; and so to have been handed on, without any considerable interruptions, quite down to our days. All this while, though the custom has so much antiquity to plead for it, and has been preserved with much uniformity for so many ages, I know not whether we are obliged to our ancestors for handing it down to us so regularly or not. Might not one very fairly ask some difficult questions in relation to it? Would it not have been better for us, when we are young, to be instructed thoroughly in our *own* language, than in any dead language whatever? Is a minister now to preach, or a lawyer to plead, or a gentleman in parliament to speak in Latin? Yet, in our schools, we are to this day instructed to write themes, and to make orations, in the language of the Romans; with almost a total neglect of that, which I think is the most necessary for us, not only in conversation but in almost all the business of life. This it is that has made me often think, that the school education in use at present among us is founded on a blunder: Such a sort of blunder, for instance, as that of some christian churches,

in

in continuing the use of the Latin tongue in all their public devotions for so many ages, since that language has ceased to be generally understood among them. But granting that there were no mistake in the present case; and supposing, that the very wisest aim for our school education now, is that which is so generally in fashion; I should still be apt to imagine, that we are wrong in the methods most usually taken to pursue the end which is proposed. If the general design of our schools should be that of teaching us to understand, what the Latin and Greek authors have said in their writings, why then are we led so much into the shades, that the modern commentators have cast around them?—Why are we so often obliged to fix hundreds of their lines in order, one after another, in our heads; and taught to repeat whole books of HOMER and VIRGIL, by rote?—Why are we plunged so much oftener in the works of the ancient poets, than in those of their historians?—And why is every boy, set to write things, that are called Latin verses; and obliged to endeavour at becoming a poet in a foreign tongue?—Why must we in some schools be taught to speak, and in all obliged to write, in languages that have been dead for so many centuries?—And, why must all the youth at our schools (however different their geniuses are, or whatever they are designed for in life) be all instructed in the very same things, and pretty nearly in the very same track?

POLYMETES, FOLIO, MDCCXLVII. p. 287.

P A R A P H R A S E

ON THE

REV. DR. WATTS'S CELEBRATED DISTICH,

ON THE

S T U D Y O F L A N G U A G E S.

“LET every foreign tongue alone
 “Till you can spell and read your own.”
 With equal justice, sense and truth,
 So says the guide and friend of youth:

For

For ignorant in that, 'tis plain,
 Your boast of literature is vain;
 But make your own your first concern,
 All others you may quickly learn;
 And thus with minds prepar'd and free,
 Their beauties taste, their idioms see.

Pedants may flout and keep a pother
 About this language, and the other,
 And swear that none can write or speak,
 Who have not Latin learn'd and Greek :
 ' He of all judgment is depriv'd,
 ' Who knows not whence a word's deriv'd,
 ' And every Briton willy nilly,
 ' Must dig good English out of LILLY.'
 These are vague notions foster'd long,
 Crude in their birth, in practice wrong ;
 Like many more of ancient date,
 Wisely reformed or obsolete.

Thousands, 'tis true, the course have run,
 Which reason would have bid them shun :
 'Tis common sense and good in law,
 To furnish brick we should have straw ;
 But by the mystic code of schools
 There's neither straw allow'd nor tools ;
 And years of pain, and learning's stock,
 Begin and end in—*Hic, hæc, hoc!!!*
 What charms are there, in sense or sound,
 Of such intrinsic merit found,
 That, not thro' prejudice to err,
 Terms of our own we mayn't prefer?
 And just as well the purport fit,
 With OXFORD writing,—*He, she, it?*
 Or do they more in church or state
 Improve discourse, or point debate?

Poor boys in training, it appears,
 Condemn'd to waste their tender years
 On exercises, which conduce
 To little or no real use,
 Seem to perpetuate BRITAIN's doom,
 To groan beneath the yoke of ROME.

Rome

ROME that abandon'd us in need,
 Still o'er our judgment takes the lead ;
 We scout her eagles with disdain,
 The fasces still usurp domain ;
 Still, of court influence tho' bereft,
 In schools the badge of slavery's left,
 And interest still, or affectation,
 Warps the free spirit of the nation ;
 Tho' richer prospects court our view,
 Than ever GREEK or ROMAN knew. —
 All must be through the classics led,
 Before the horn-book well they've read ;
 A more oppressive task in fact
 Than ÆGYPT's tyrant durst exact,
 Which genius in the cradle cramps,
 And all her generous efforts damps ;
 But in your native language skill'd,
 You on a sure foundation build ;
 The edifice will rise sublime,
 In perfect order, place and time.

There, and there only should commence
 The path to knowlege, wit and sense ;
 For there the young ingenuous mind,
 The road to excellence will find,
 And in the flowery walks of science,
 May bid disgraceful birch defiance ;
 But who, a novice there, aspires,
 Must work his way through thorns and briars,
 And when the craggy steep is past,
 May skulk a useless drone at last ;
 Nay, tho' he get A. B. at College,
 Be stopt of his degree in knowlege.

Then cultivate your native soil,
 The harvest will repay your toil ;
 And be it every Parent's care,
 To plant the seeds of goodness there.

THE petty ambition of pretending to superior skill, in other languages, seems aptly and not unpleasantly ridiculed in the following anecdote:

One of our modern modishly-bred ladies, boasting of her proficiency in the *French* tongue, asserted she understood and spoke it better than she did English; and, for the truth, appealed to a French lady in company. The adroit Parisian very candidly and pertinently replied, ‘O, my dear Madam! I am not sufficiently acquainted with the English to be judge; but I should think it make me no compliment to say, I speak any language half so much better as my own.’

MONSIEUR ROLLIN,

AN ENTHUSIAST FOR LATIN AND GREEK, PREVIOUSLY
RECOMMENDS THE STUDY OF THE
VERNACULAR TONGUE.

“THE Romans have taught us,” says the pious, learned and justly-celebrated professor, “by the application they made to the study of their own language, what we should do for the attainment of ours; with them children were habituated to a purity of speech from the cradle. This was looked upon as the first and most essential care next to that of their morals; and was particularly recommended to mothers, nurses and servants. They were advised to be upon their guard, as much as possible, not to let any bad expression or false pronunciation escape them in presence of children; lest those first impressions should become a kind of second nature in them, which it might be afterwards almost impossible to amend.”

“It were well if we took the same care to perfect ourselves in *our mother tongue*. There are few who understand it by rule. The speaking of it is thought sufficient to make us excel in it; and it is seldom that any one applies himself to study the genius, and acquire the delicacies of it. Nay, very often the most common rudiments of it are not known, as is often seen in the letters of men of very great abilities.”

“As the first elements of speech are in a degree the same in all languages, it is natural to begin the instruction of youth

F f

with

with the rules of the grammar of their own tongue ; the principles of which will serve also for Latin and Greek ; and will appear far less difficult and discouraging, as there will be little more to do than to make them range in a certain order such things as they already know, though somewhat confusedly."

Rollin's Belles Lettres, vol. 1.

D R. C A M P B E L L,

A REVEREND AND LEARNED CLERGYMAN OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH, NOT A SCHOOLMASTER, SPEAKING OF A WRITER'S STYLE, OBSERVES :

"IT is difficult for men very conversant in any language to disentangle themselves from its structure and arrangement ;— and therefore it may, at this day, be doubted whether much reading of Latin be very promotive of purity in the English phraseology. MILTON'S History of England affords a strong presumption for this doubt ; for we may observe in it throughout, that the structure of the periods, and the arrangement of the words are so close to the idiom of that language, a school-boy might translate it into tolerable Latin."

Strictures on the Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, &c. page 146.

D R. J O H N S O N

TAKES UP THE QUESTION OF A PREVAILING ATTENTION TO FOREIGN TONGUES, AND HIS OPINION IS DECISIVE.

"THERE is another cause of alteration more prevalent than any other, which yet in the present state of the world cannot be obviated. A mixture of two languages will produce a third distinct from both, and they will always be mixed, where the chief part of education, and the most conspicuous accomplishment, is skill in ancient or in foreign tongues. He that has long cultivated another language, will find its words and combinations crowd upon his

his memory ; and haste and negligence, refinement and affectation, will obtrude borrowed terms and exotick expressions.

“ The great pest of speech is frequency of translation. No book was ever turned from one language into another, without imparting something of its native idiom ; this is the most mischievous and comprehensive innovation ; single words may enter by thousands, and the fabrick of the tongue continue the same ; but new phraseology changes much at once ; it alters not the single stones of the building, but the order of the columns. If an academy should be established for the cultivation of our style, which I, who can never wish to see dependance multiplied, hope the spirit of *English* liberty will hinder or destroy, let them, instead of compiling grammars and dictionaries, endeavour with all their influence, to stop the licence of translators, whose idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of *France*.

“ If the changes that we fear be thus irresistible, what remains but to acquiesce with silence, as in the other insurmountable distresses of humanity ? It remains that we retard what we cannot repel, that we palliate what we cannot cure. Life may be lengthened by care, though death cannot be ultimately defeated : tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration ; we have long preserved our constitution, let us make some struggles for our language.”

E P I G R A M,

ON A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN'S ENTERING THE HOUSE JUST
AS A LONG-WINDED SPEECHIFIER CLOSED HIS
INFLAMMATORY HARANGUE.

TURGESIUS had gabbled himself out of breath ;

‘ A nick ! ’ cries Laconic, ‘ I’m in at the death.’

JUVENAL'S

JUVENALS

STATE OF THE LEARNED.

SATIRE VII.

ALTERED FROM DRYDEN.

THROUGH every stage of ever-varying life
 Man to vexation is expos'd and strife;
 But, oh! what stock of patience wants the fool,
 Who wastes his time and lungs in teaching school?
 To hear the babbling of untoward boys,
 Conning trite forms, on mischief bent and noise!
 Sitting or standing, still confin'd to roar,
 In one dull round, the same thing o'er and o'er:
 Prelecting still, enforcing and expounding;
 Their unsusceptive ears still all confounding:
 What part of speech, declension, number, case,
 Mood, tense, voice, person, government and place?
 Themes to discuss, epistles to indite,
 Accompts to shine in, and with grace to write;
 The world's extensive volume, old and new,
 With Scientific mastery to view;
 Historic lore, and chronologic too;
 Then to pronounce the various works of wit,
 With sound discretion, and with action fit;
 All aim at these: but at the quarter-day,
 The parent grumbles, and is loath to pay.
 ' Pay, Sir! for what? The boy knows nothing more,
 ' The six months past, than what he knew before!—
 Taught or untaught, dunces are still the same:
 But what of that? the master's still to blame;
 Without exception, though each single boy
 In open school his utmost care employ;
 Tho' hours on hours, day after day, he has tried
 With shame to check, or stimulate with pride;
 Encourag'd, threaten'd, reason'd, sooth'd, carefs'd,
 To rouse the latent spark within his breast,
 Defeated and perplex'd, 'till his parch'd tongue
 With sheer fatigue has to his palate clung.

The

The murder'd matter cries, would parents hear
 But half the stuff that I am doom'd to bear,
 For that revenge I'd quit the whole arrears—
 But, if my friendly counsel might be us'd,
 In purse and fame egregiously abus'd,
 Such barren soil let not the learned try,
 But to more grateful occupations fly:
 The meanest trade, the spade and pick-ax take,
 Rather the sweltering hod your option make.
 More to be envied, easier and more sure,
 The drudge's dole, who plies from door to door,
 Than his, who, counting on his hard-earn'd gains,
 Reaps such a sorry harvest for his pains.
 Music and dancing lavishly are bought;
 Those youth are long and sedulously taught;
 But sense and learning deem'd not worth a groat.*

Whate'er connects with luxury and show,
 Largely on that our prodigals bestow;
 Capacious palaces and villas, grac'd
 With all the wild extravagance of taste;
 Exotics nurs'd with counterfeited fun,
 And whole estates to pleasure gardens run;
 Coursers of blood, and matchless in the race,
 Train'd to the turf, or destin'd to the chace;
 Expensive services of curious plate;
 Suites of domestics, carriages of state,
 And troops of DUNS announce them wise and great.
 But, tho' superb the mansion be or not,
 The cook and cellar never are forgot;
 And, nought to risk in serious matters, here
 Talents and breeding must be made appear:—
 In scorn of character, of time and health,
 The table groans with the parade of wealth;
 Here rich and poor, of high and low degree,
 Strain all alike, and scorn oeconomy.
 CLAUDIUS, to fashion and his taste a dupe,
 Rags half an ox in a turrene of soup;
 But more, if possible, profusion shines
 In wild variety of costly wines:
 Yet, 'midst this wasteful riot, there accrues
 A thrifty pittance for *Quintilian's* dues;

For,

For, to breed up the heir to common sense,
Is ever more the parent's least expence.

' From whence then, comes *Quintilian's* vast estate? —

No doubt he was the darling son of fate ;

And, out of mere caprice, luck made him great. }

Urge not in precedent one single man,

As rare as a white crow or fable swan ;

Some friendly stars exerted all their power,

And smiled propitious on his natal hour ;

To them, not merit his success was due ;

For fortune never was to merit true ;

And they who draw from fortune's ample source,

Are good and wise, and all things else of course :

'Tis she that flings the die ; and as she flings,

Of kings makes pedants, and of pedants, kings.

Most masters execrate the barren chair ;

Like him who hang'd himself through mere despair

And poverty ; or him, whom *CAIUS* sent,

For liberty of speech, to banishment.

Even *SOCRATES*, ungrateful *ATHENS* fees

In want, and sentenced by unjust decrees.*

In peace, ye shades of our forefathers ! rest ;

No heavy earth your sacred bones molest :

Eternal spring, and rising flowers adorn

The relics of each venerable urn,

Who pious reverence their preceptors paid,

As parents honour'd, and as gods obey'd.

ACHILLES, grown in stature, feared the rod,

And stood corrected at the Centaur's nod ;

In useful learning did his years employ,

And all the hero promised in the boy.

The scene's much alter'd in our modern schools, }

For, blind the parent, every *Tony* rules :

And masters but mere cyphers prove and tools.

Young *Sulky*, by his tutor once reprov'd,

Swell'd with revenge, and swore he'd be remov'd ;

And, lo ! a miracle ! to make it good,

A bottle of red ink is turn'd to blood ;

He smears his shirt, and *Abigail*, his friend,

Alarms mama, and so he gains his end ;

And

And every tattling gossip thro' the nation
Brands the fell tyrant's name, and blasts his reputation.*

Go ask what fruit PALEMEN's pains produce,
And how he's paid? Why amply—in abuse:
And, tho' approv'd his care, confess'd his toil,
They hardly claim one supercilious smile:
Some ten days over, or perchance a score,
He's pass'd unnotic'd, and is known no more.
As to his profits, tho' confin'd and bare,
Yet even of those the ushers must have share:
Besides, the rents and servants must be paid;
And thus of little still a less is made.
Yet, in the bargain, every sly device
Is tried, to screw out something of the stated price:
And, after chaffering as with porters, still,
Dear generous souls! they tax the quarter's bill:
If not contented, 'take your bill away;
'Commence your suit, and try the law's delay;
Or, acquiescing to avoid the suit,
They bleed your purse and character to boot.
But who the dues curtail, and thus protract,
Most from the abject pedagogue exact.
'Be sure you perfect him in grammar rules,
'And all the best historians read in schools;
'The authors; every poet to a hair;
'I, as your own, commit him to your care;
'Your daily pains, beseech you, to employ,
'To form the future conduct of my boy,
'And work him, like a waxen babe, with art,
'To perfect symmetry in every part;
'His principles and morals strictly guide;
'Spare no expence, but all his wants provide:
'He always shew'd a generous, docile spirit;
'Is tender, gentle, and you'll find has merit.
'Be, Sir! his better parent; and beware
'No improprieties his health impair.
'This be your task'—and literally pursu'd,
The great reward is——BLACK INGRATITUDE!!

Line 49. ¶ An opulent citizen of Athens, applying to the philosopher ARISTIPPUS, desired to know, what he should give him to instruct his son? 'A thousand drachmas,' replied ARISTIPPUS (about 32l. 5s. 10d. ster.) 'How!' said the Athenian, 'I could purchase a slave with that money.' 'Do so,' said the philosopher, 'and thou shalt have two;' giving him to understand, that his son would have the manners and vices of a slave, if he did not afford him the means of a liberal education.—ASCHAM, Queen ELIZABETH's preceptor, has the following remarkable passage, to the like effect. 'Pity it is,' says he, 'that commonly more care is had, yea, and that among men deemed wise, to find out rather a cunning man for their horses, than a cunning man for their children. They say nay, in words, but they do so in deed; for, to one they will give a stipend of two hundred crowns by the year, and loath to offer the other two hundred shillings: God, that sitteth in heaven, laugheth their choice to scorn, and rewardeth their liberality accordingly; for he suffereth them to have tame and well-ordered horses, but wild and unfortunate children; and, therefore, in the end, they find more pleasure in their horses, than comfort in their children.'

Line 95. THRASYMACHUS, born at Carthage, and SECUNDUS CARRINAS, both professors of Greek, the first at Athens, the other at Rome, are the characters alluded to.

SOCRATES, the most exalted character antiquity, and perhaps human nature has to boast of, taught at Athens; his virtue proved his destruction!—Being condemned to die, he wanted wherewithal to pay for the juice of hemlock which he was sentenced to drink, and was reduced to the necessity of applying to one of his friends, for money to defray the expence of the poisoned chalice, and discharge the jailor's fees.

Line 108. See, *She Stoops to Conquer*, a Comedy by GOLDSMITH: a modern allusion, and a recent fact are here substituted, in place of those in the original, to the same purport, but at this day rather obsolete.

This curious, self-willed, self-directed genius was, from this notable exertion of ingenuity, successively, in every stage of his life, instrumental to his own undoing; he speedily got through a handsome patrimony, and was not very long ago in a menial station under the late Alderman Jenkin, and at last dwindled to a common labourer in a brickfield!!

It is truly shameful and a reproach to common sense to hear the complaints of the expensiveness of Education, equally unfounded as unreasonable; the fopperies indeed of Education are sufficiently expensive, and the necessities of life, diet, lodging, washing and clothes, in these hard times no less felt by teachers than parents, for which there is no compensation, cannot in any case be charged to the account of Literature; which, independent of its utility, is indisputably the CHEAPEST article in the way of purchase.—The best School Education that can be procured, books, &c. included, seldom stands the parent altogether in fifty Guineas, disbursed in a course of years, by petty instalments; for the most part scarcely a moiety of that sum, and not one half of that, deducting the accessory and certain expenses of rent, ushers, servants, repairs, &c. &c. accrues to the teacher for years of fatigue, anxiety, and disappointment. O! wonderful encouragement to Letters!!



